tactics

木下さくら
×
東山和子

10

tactics 10

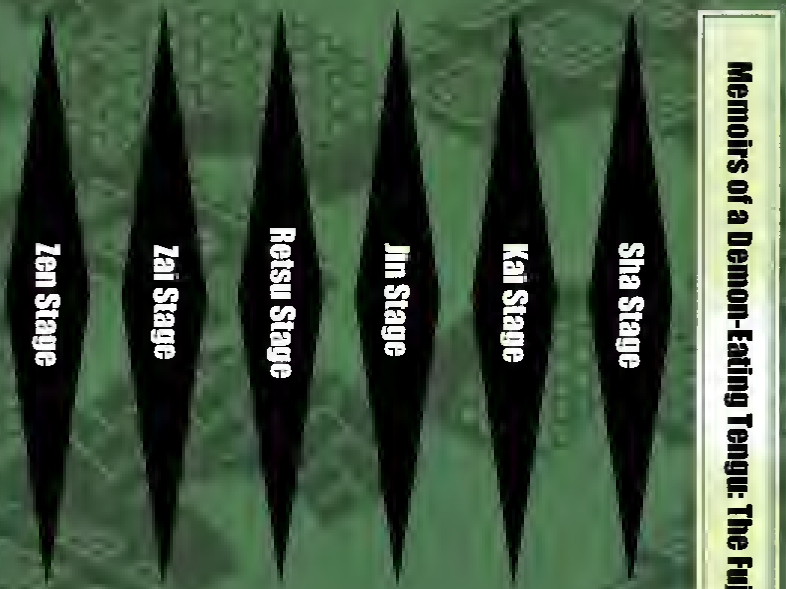
木下さくら × 東山和子

Sakura Kinoshita × Kazuko Higashiyama

tactics

Sakura Kinoshita × Kazuko Higashiyama

10



Memoirs of a Demon-Eating Tengu: The Fuji Tales

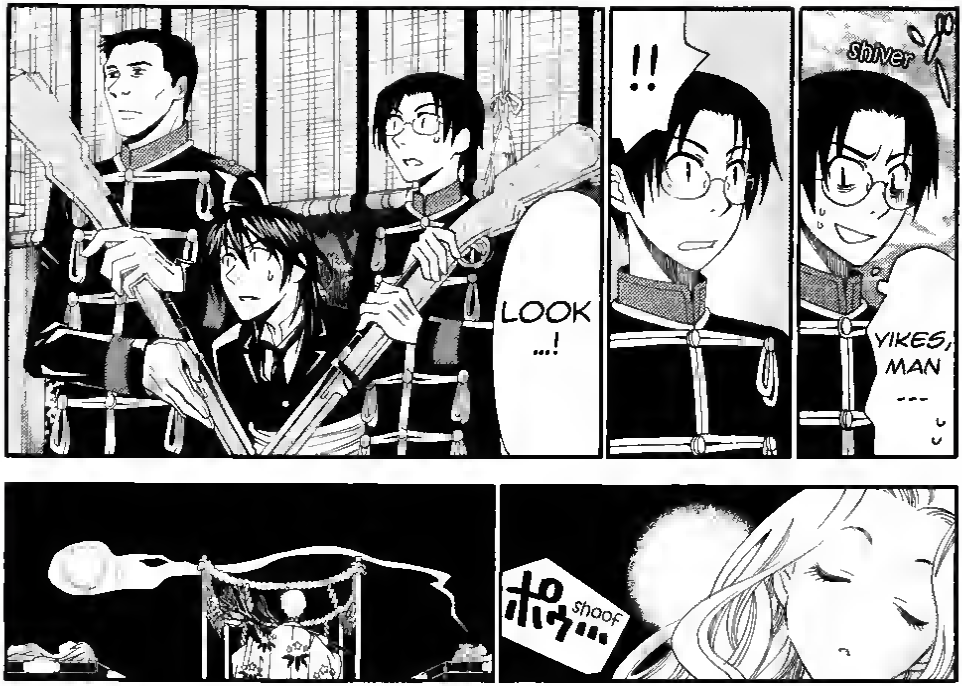
...the God Izanagi no Mikoto came into the light at Tsukushi...
SLIP
On the Celestial Plain where the spirits dwell, by the power of the divine fire and water principles...
...and bathed himself in the Tachibana River at Ahagi Plain.
MASTER RAIKOU, I KNOW YOU ARE STILL GETTING CHANGED ...
Gods of purification, we entreat you to take away our sins, and cleanse us of all pollution.
Great living spirits of Heaven and Earth...
SIGH...
...AND THIS IS RATHER HASTY...
Hear the wishes of our hearts with sharpened ears. Thus we most humbly pray.

Memoirs of a Demon-Eating Tengu: The Fuji Tales
Sha Stage

tactics

I WONDER IF KAN-TAROU'S ALL RIGHT...?
...
YOUR COM-PLEXION HAS GROWN PALE...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MISTER DEMON EATER?
BUT MORE IM-POR-TANT
YES. HE IS REST-ING AT PRES-ENT.
WHY DO I SENSE FUJI'S SPIRIT E/MANAT-ING FROM THE FOREIGN GIRL?
LADY FUJI'S SOUL HAS ALWAYS RE-MAINED IN THIS WORLD, AND SINCE SHE HAS NO BODY, ROSALIE, WHO HAS GREAT SPIRITUAL POWER, IS SERVING AS A MEDIUM FOR HER.
BUT WE ALSO REQUIRE LADY FUJI'S ON/MYOU SKILLS, AND IN ORDER FOR HER TO FULLY USE THEM...
...IT IS CRUCIAL THAT SHE POSSESS THE BODY OF A WOMAN OF THE MINAMOTO CLAN.

MISTRESS AYAME IS HERE TO SERVE THAT PURPOSE AT THIS TIME.
HOWEVER, ALTHOUGH MISTRESS AYAME IS OF MINAMOTO BLOOD, HER SPIRITUAL POWER IS LESS THAN THAT OF YOUR AVERAGE PERSON, AND SO HER BODY CANNOT RECEIVE LADY FUJI'S SPIRIT.
THEN, THAT GIRL...
YES. SHE WAS BORN TO BE A VESSEL FOR LADY FUJI.
HEY, WATANABE, YOU TALK TOO MUCH.
...
Living water out of wood, greatest fortune, we pray for harmony
Swish
Spirits of wood, water, earth, metal and fire, entreat the favor of the god of the crag.
splash
HMM...
SO YOUR RESTORING HER POWERS TO THE WORLD WILL LEAD TO SHUTEN'S RESURRECTION...?
BRING IT ON.
I'LL TAKE DOWN FUJI AND THE WHOLE LOT OF YOU...!


LOOK ...!
!!
shiver
YIKES, MAN ---
shoof

Living metal from earth, greatest fortune, seek harmony.
Living water from metal, greatest fortune, seek harmony.

IT WAS RE-PELLED!
ZZT
AND WE WENT THROUGH ALL THAT TROU-BLE...
rumple
MASTER RAIKOU, WHAT ARE YOU DOING...?
!
AWW MAN, IT DIDN'T WORK AFTER ALL.

H-HEY, YOU! HOLD STILL!
...BUT I GUESS THAT WASN'T ENOUGH.
I TRIED SMEARING HER WITH FRESH YOUKAI BLOOD TO BRING UP HER SPIRITUAL POWER...
AUGH!
I'M GETTING SICK OF YOUR LITTLE FARCE
IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU LET ME LEAVE
AND I'LL BE TAKING MY IDIOT MASTER WITH ME.

ka-tang
whiff
!!
schrip
A SPELL ...?
...EX-ACTLY.
YOU DO NOT DEIGN TO FACE ME YOUR-SELF?
THEN COME PLAY WITH ME, DEMON EATER!
prink
prink

Slash
Zetsumei sokuzetsu un zanzandari zandarihan.
Clap!
bwoom
GUH ...!
AMAZ-ING...
OW...
HIS SORCERY IS EQUAL TO THAT OF MASTER RAIKOU!
NO, NOT QUITE.
HUH?

whump
?!
MISTER DEMON EATER IS AT HIS LIMIT.
IT TAKES QUITE A LOT OF YOUKAI ENERGY TO USE ONMYOU-DO.
THAT'S WHY YOU DIDN'T USE IT BEFORE.
IT'S REALLY NO SURPRISE, CONSIDER-ING ITS SORCERY WAS DE-VISED BY AND FOR HUMANS.
IT'S NOT WITHOUT RISK FOR A YOUKAI LIKE YOU TO WIELD IT.
LET KAN-TAROU AND ROSA-LIE GO...
SURE, ONCE WE'VE FINISHED THE JOB.

BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME TO KEEP PLAYING WITH YOU NOW...
SORRY, DEMON EATER.
whump
EVER HEARD OF "GOD EATING," DEMON EATER?
OHHH! I'VE GOT A GREAT IDEA!
tomp
... WHAT ...?
tomp
tomp
ARE YOU FRIG-GIN' JOK--
WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO SAVE YOUR PRECIOUS FRIENDS AS WELL?
SO HEY! LET'S HAVE AYAME EAT A PIECE OF YOU, DEMON EATER.
THAT SHOULD RAISE HER SPIRITUAL POWER ENOUGH, AND THEN YOU'LL GET TO SEE LADY FUJI!
IT WAS A CUSTOM WHEREIN A FOOD FORMED IN THE SHAPE OF A GOD OR A POWER-FUL BEING WAS EATEN
THE IDEA IS THAT YOU GAIN THE GOD'S POWER BY CON-SUMING IT, RIGHT?

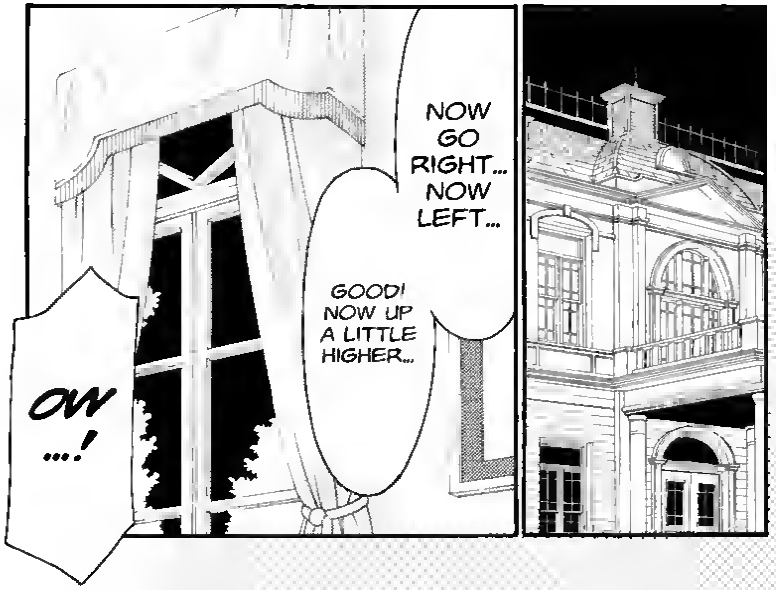
PLEASE, GRANT MY WISH.
LORD DEMON-EATING TENGU
I HAVE DONE AS YOU REQUESTED, THOUGH I AM NOT SURE IF IT WILL BE TO YOUR LIKING...
... MASTER RAIKOU
YOU CERTAINLY DO EXCELLENT WORK URABE!
JUST LIKE THAT, DEMON EATER GAVE IN!

INFLICTING PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL AGONY, BUT WITHOUT KILLING...
...IS THE BASIS OF TORTURE.
I'M NOT SURE TORTURE WAS THE IDEA, GRAMPS.
IT'S RATHER IMPRESSIVE THAT HE DIDN'T SCREAM EVEN ONCE.
THAT MADE IT SOMEWHAT DULL, ACTUALLY.
...
YOU OUGHTA BE GRATEFUL, DEMON EATER!

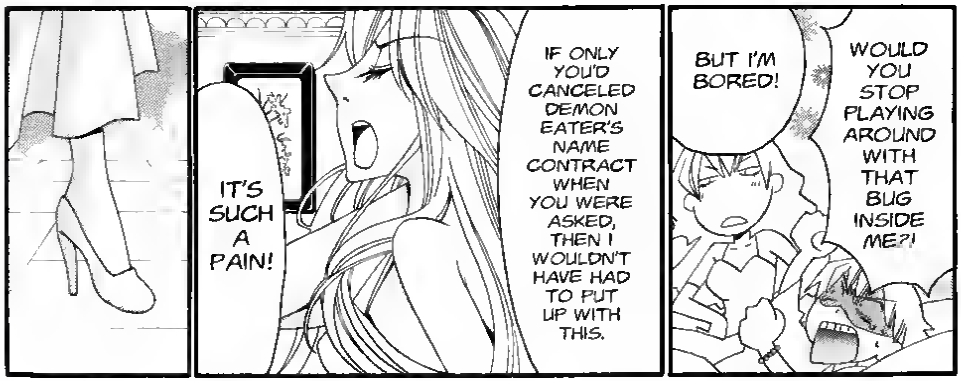
BUT HOW LIMITED YOUR POWER HAS BECOME ...
SHUT UP, YOU LITTLE SHIT...
WOW, THERE'S STILL LIFE IN YOU.
HE WAS READY TO START BY PULLING YOUR FANGS! GOOD THING I STOPPED HIM.
The dolt.

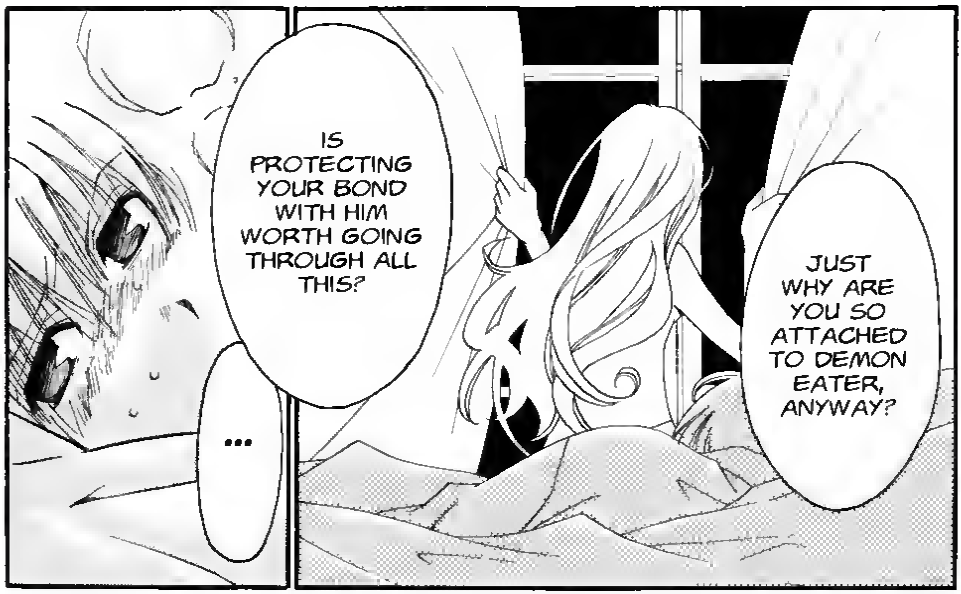
ONCE THE GREATEST, THE STRONGEST, THE MOST LEGENDARY DEMON-EATING TENGU...
NOW YOU'RE BOGGED DOWN BY WHAT YOU HAVE TO PROTECT.
YOU'RE NOT "THE STRONGEST" ANYMORE.
...

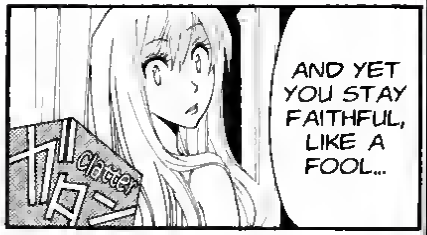
HEY, I SAID SHUT IT...
SHIT-HEAD.


NOW GO RIGHT... NOW LEFT...
GOOD! NOW UP A LITTLE HIGHER...
OW ...!

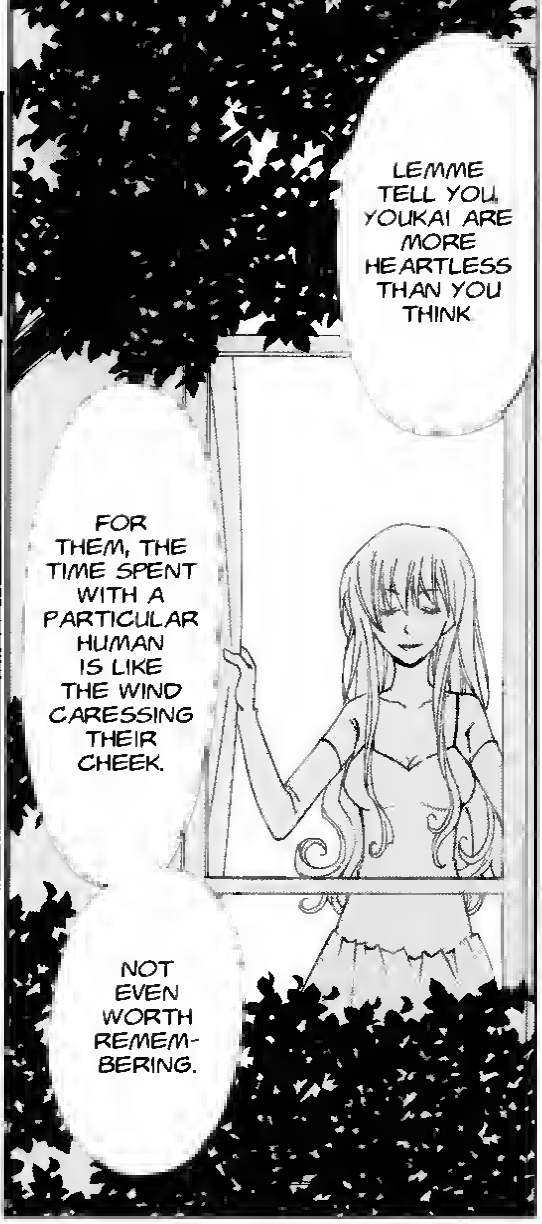
Waah!
Wriggle
Wriggle
THAT REALLY HURTS, DARN IT!!


IT'S SUCH A PAIN!
IF ONLY YOU'D CANCELED DEMON EATER'S NAME CONTRACT WHEN YOU WERE ASKED, THEN I WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO PUT UP WITH THIS.
BUT I'M BORED!
WOULD YOU STOP PLAYING AROUND WITH THAT BUG INSIDE ME?!

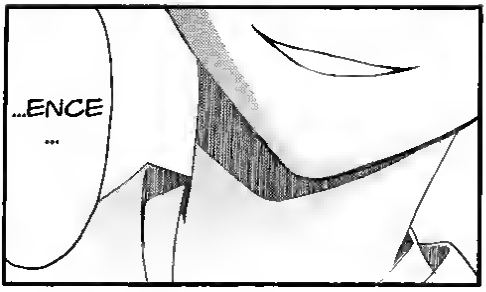

...
IS PROTECTING YOUR BOND WITH HIM WORTH GOING THROUGH ALL THIS?
JUST WHY ARE YOU SO ATTACHED TO DEMON EATER, ANYWAY?


AND YET YOU STAY FAITHFUL, LIKE A FOOL...
Clatter

WHAT ...?
WHY DID YOU STAND UP?

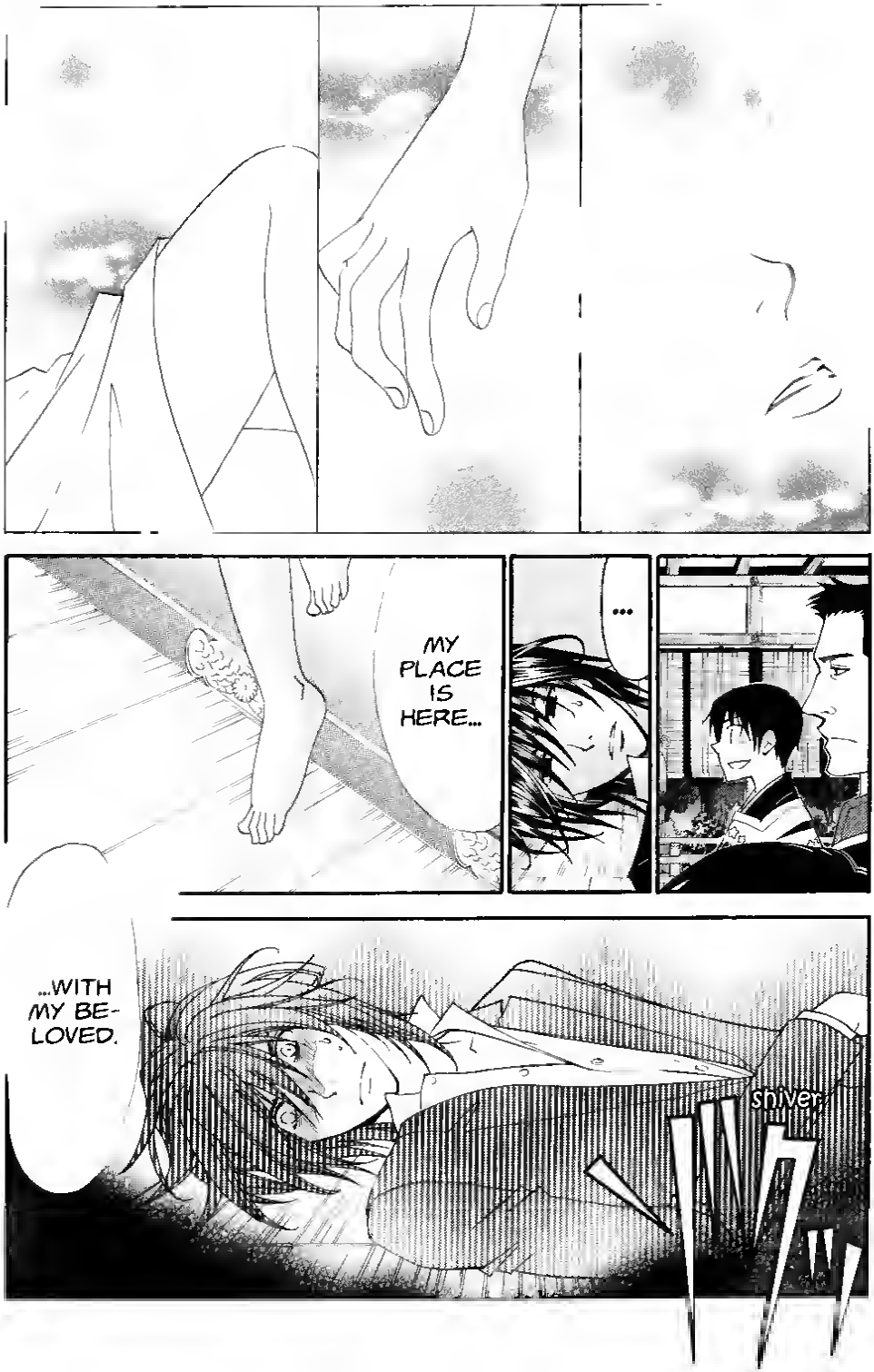

LEMME TELL YOU, YOUKAI ARE MORE HEARTLESS THAN YOU THINK
FOR THEM, THE TIME SPENT WITH A PARTICULAR HUMAN IS LIKE THE WIND CARESSING THEIR CHEEK.
NOT EVEN WORTH REMEMBERING.

HMM?


...ENCE ...

SILENCE, YOU.
DEMONS ARE BUT ANNOYING MAYFLIES.
NO...
IT CAN'T BE...
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOUR...?!

C'MERE.
THIS IS WHERE YOU BELONG.
shwiff
fwaah
THIS WAY, LADY FUJI.
shwaa


MY PLACE IS HERE...
...
...WITH MY BE-LOVED.
shiver

O NOBLE AND DREADFUL TAIZANFU-KUN, BEFORE YOUR ALTAR...
fwoom
...I BE-SEECH YOU.

ALL IS PRE-PARED.
AS WAS PROM-ISED ON THAT DAY.

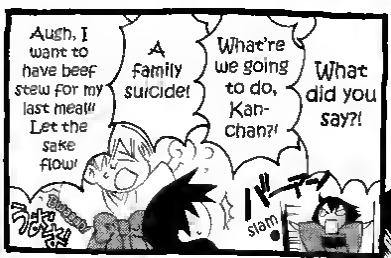
...I HAVE COME TO THIS PLACE.
AS PROM-ISED ON THAT DAY...
AND WE MEET AGAIN AT LAST.
Clatter
RIN.
!

Memoirs of a Demon-Eating Tengu: The Fuji Tales
Kai Stage

Presenting the Flyer Distributed for avarus magazine's bookstore Launch!

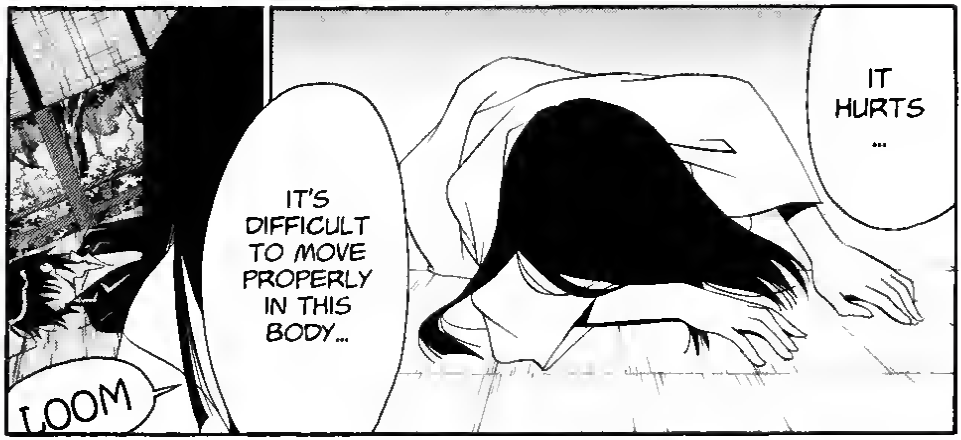
When asked what "avarus" means:
(H)=Kazuko Higashiyama (K)=Sakura Kinoshita

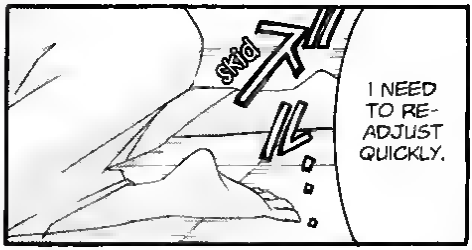
(H) Yeah, what does it mean?! Is it a... a... a bastard? (That's mean!).
(K) Hey, it can't be that! I'll try: a...ava... avalanche.
(H) That's just got the first part. We need all the letters. A... A... Ava, rush on home.
(K) Uh... sure, that works. How about "Avant garde"? It sounds more French.
(H) No, that's not much better than "avalanche" was.


Augh, I want to have beef stew for my last meal!! Let the sake flow!
A family suicide!
What're we going to do, Kan-chan?!
What did you say?!
Thump
Slam

The correct answer: the Latin word for "greed."

tactics


IT HURTS ...
IT'S DIFFICULT TO MOVE PROPERLY IN THIS BODY...
LOOM


Skid
I NEED TO RE-ADJUST QUICKLY.

I'D GOTTEN USED TO WALKING ON FOUR LEGS...

I HAVE TO DO MY BEST.
I DON'T WANT YOU LAUGHING AT ME WHEN WE'RE TOGETHER, RIN.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU...?

tee hee
SILLY RIN.
tee hee

I'M BACK WITH MY BELOVED WHO I'VE MISSED EVER SO MUCH.
I'M SO HAPPY MY HEART COULD BURST...

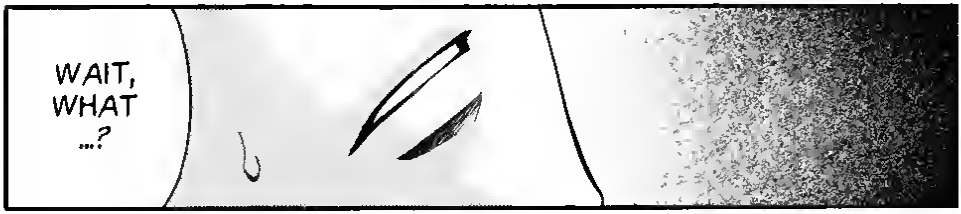
MY DAR-LING RIN...
DON'T GIVE ME THAT CRAP!
YOU BE-TRAYED ME! HOW DARE YOU CLAIM TO BE HAPPY TO SEE ME!

HOW CAN YOU BE SMILING NOW?
WHAT?

SHIT... MOVE, DAM-MIT!
MOVE...!
I'M GOING TO KILL YOU, FUJI...!
YOU CAN'T KILL ME.

FORGIVE ME, MY GENTLE DEMON-EATING TENGU...
YOU CAN'T, BECAUSE I'M YOUR MASTER.
I HAD NO TIME TO EXPLAIN BACK THEN.
I HAD TO HIDE YOU AWAY FROM THE WORLD, NO MATTER WHAT.
?
HIDE ME? WHAT THE HECK FROM...?
...I JUST WANT TO BE WITH YOU, RIN.
SO FOR NOW, I WANT YOU TO TRUST ME ON THIS.

FROM THIS MOMENT ON, I WILL LIVE IN THE SAME TIME AS YOU, RIN.
SO I WANT YOU TO LET ME ATONE FOR THE SIN I HAVE COMMIT-TED, EVEN IF ONLY LITTLE BY LITTLE.


WAIT, WHAT ...?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN ...?
I TOLD YOU, YOU HAVE TO TRUST ME...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "LIVE IN THE SAME TIME" AS ME?
NOT THAT PART!!
YOU MAY BE AN EXPERT IN ONMYOU-DOU, BUT A HUMAN LIKE YOU SHOULD STILL BE DEAD. YOUR SOUL LONG GONE FROM THIS WORLD.
SO WHY?!

WHY ARE YOU ALIVE RIGHT NOW?!
...STAY AWAY FROM ME...
...RIN...

Slap
WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU DONE ...?!
A LOVER'S QUARREL?
HUSH NOW, RIN...
...
DON'T TOUCH ME!
RIN... YOU'RE BEING A NOISY CHILD.
DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT A NOISY CHILD HAS TO DO?
?!
"KISS ME, RIN."
NO ...!

FUJI, STOP IT...!
RIN...
BUT I DON'T WANT TO DO THIS!
IF YOU USE *THAT* ON ME, I...
IT'S AN ORDER.
"OBEY ME, RIN."
...FUJI...!

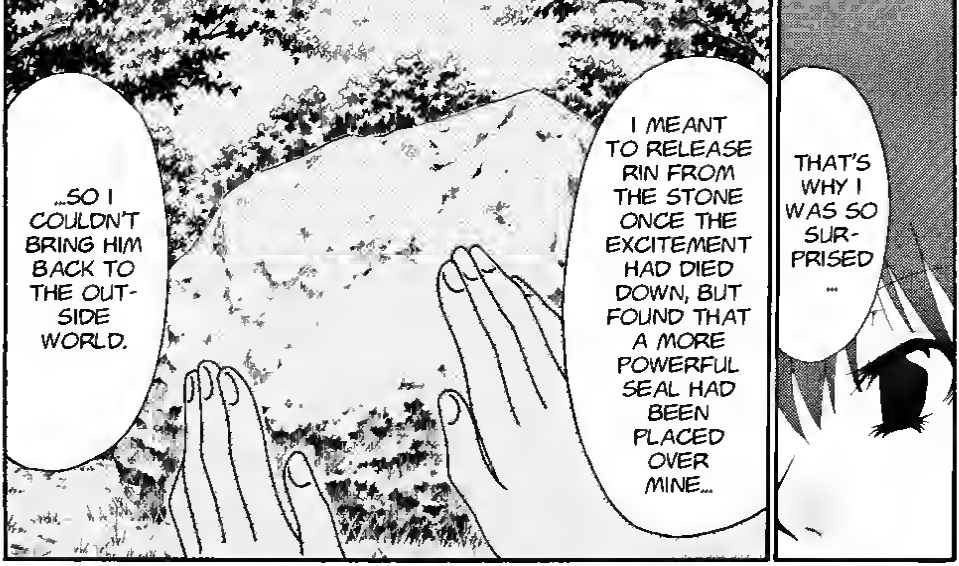
YOU DON'T HAVE TO IF YOU DON'T WANT TO.
"HARUKA, STOP."

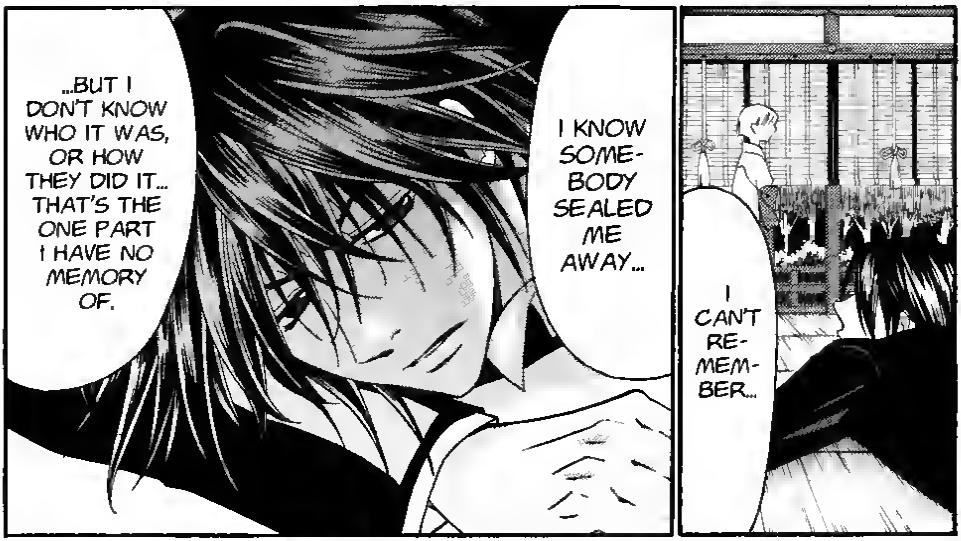
YOU SHOULDN'T BE FORCED INTO ANY-THING...
...HARUKA.

RIGHT?
SORRY ABOUT THIS... KANTA-ROU.

AS YOU WISH.
...YOU THREE, GO SEE WHAT'S UP WITH IBARAGI.
SAY...
HOW DID HE ESCAPE FROM HER...
PLEASURE TO MEET YOU... AGAIN, RIGHT?
...IN HIS CONDI-TION...?
...ICHI-NO-MIYA.
DURING THE TOILET AFFAIR.
DIDN'T WE MEET ONCE BEFORE AT HASUMI'S HOUSE?
bwoosh
...KAN-TAROU ICHINO-MIYA!
HOW COULD YOU SOIL MY RIN WITH A NEW NAME...

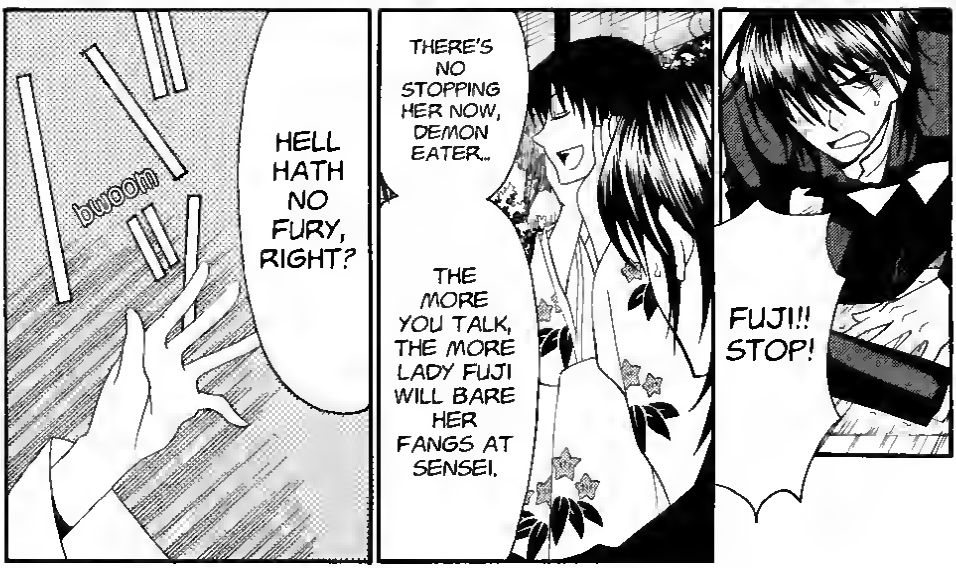
IF NOT FOR YOU, THEN RIN WOULD COME BACK TO ME...
sniff
KAN-TAROU ICHI-NOMI-YA...
WHAT SPIRIT !!
WOW!
NEITHER I, NOR MINA-MOTO, NOR ANYONE ELSE COULD BREAK RIN'S SEAL.
WHY WERE YOU THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD DO IT?
WHY ...?
clench...
I WON-DERED IF DEMON EATER HAD BEEN DOUBLY SEALED, FIRST BY LADY FUJI AND THEN BY SHUTEN.
...THAT WASN'T IT.
I ASKED THAT SAME QUESTION MYSELF-- IT REALLY IS A MYS-TERY.


...SO I COULDN'T BRING HIM BACK TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD.
I MEANT TO RELEASE RIN FROM THE STONE ONCE THE EXCITEMENT HAD DIED DOWN, BUT FOUND THAT A MORE POWERFUL SEAL HAD BEEN PLACED OVER MINE...
THAT'S WHY I WAS SO SURPRISED ...


..BUT I DON'T KNOW WHO IT WAS, OR HOW THEY DID IT... THAT'S THE ONE PART I HAVE NO MEMORY OF.
I KNOW SOMEBODY SEALED ME AWAY...
I CAN'T REMEMBER...

I SUPPOSE... YOU DID MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO MEET RIN AGAIN.
FOR THAT I'M GRATEFUL, KANTAROU ICHINOMIYA.
THEREFORE...

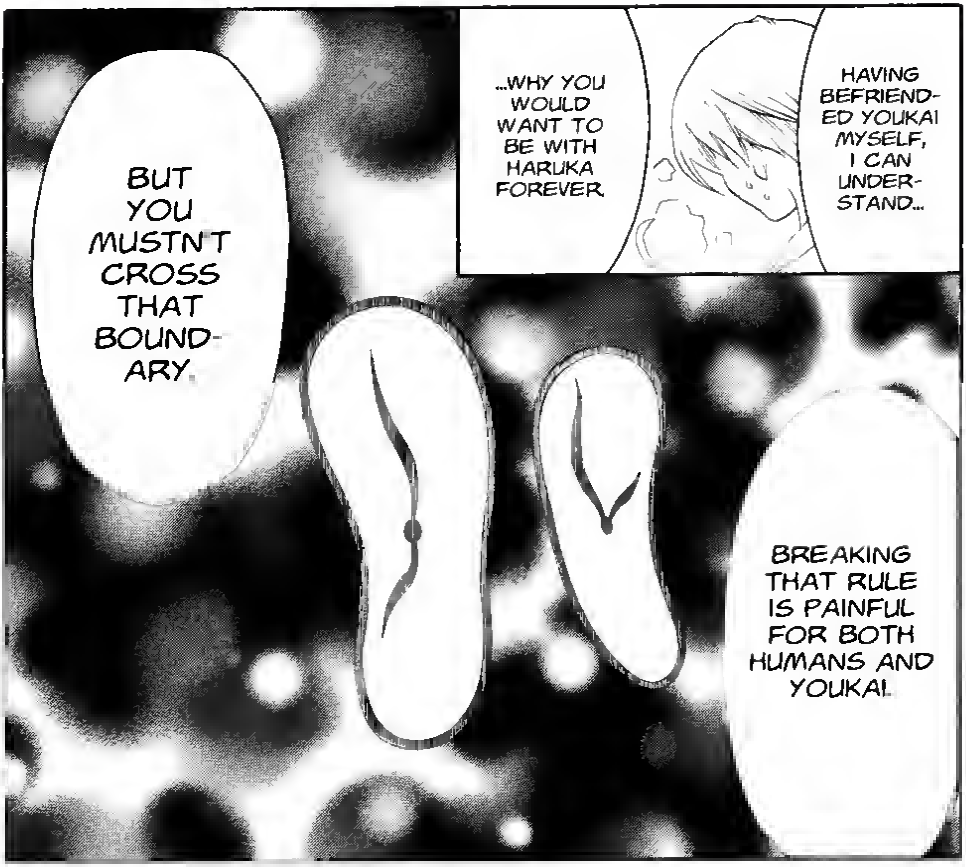
YOUR DEATH WILL BE QUICK AND PAIN-LESS!
RIN NEEDS NO OTHER MASTER THAN ME!

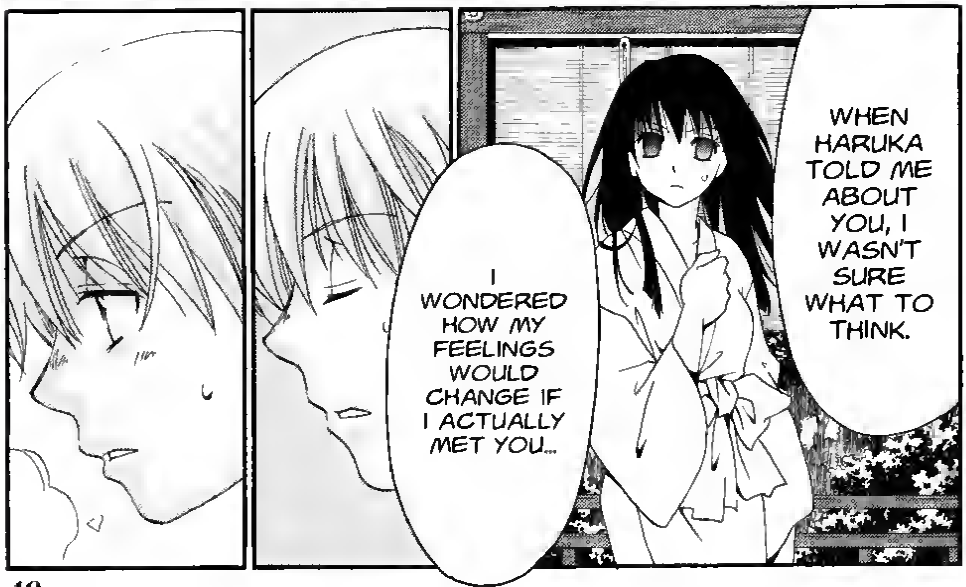

HELL HATH NO FURY, RIGHT?
buoom
THERE'S NO STOPPING HER NOW, DEMON EATER..
THE MORE YOU TALK, THE MORE LADY FUJI WILL BARE HER FANGS AT SENSEI.
FUJI!! STOP!

Antariwon sokumetsusoku birariya birari!
clap
clap
Om juchiri chararoha...
...unken sowaka.
MM-HMM...
IS THAT ESOTERIC OFFENSIVE ONMYOUDOU?
THIS SORCERY BATTLE'S WELL WORTH THE PRICE OF ADMISSION
ACCURSED THOUGH IT MAY BE.
...

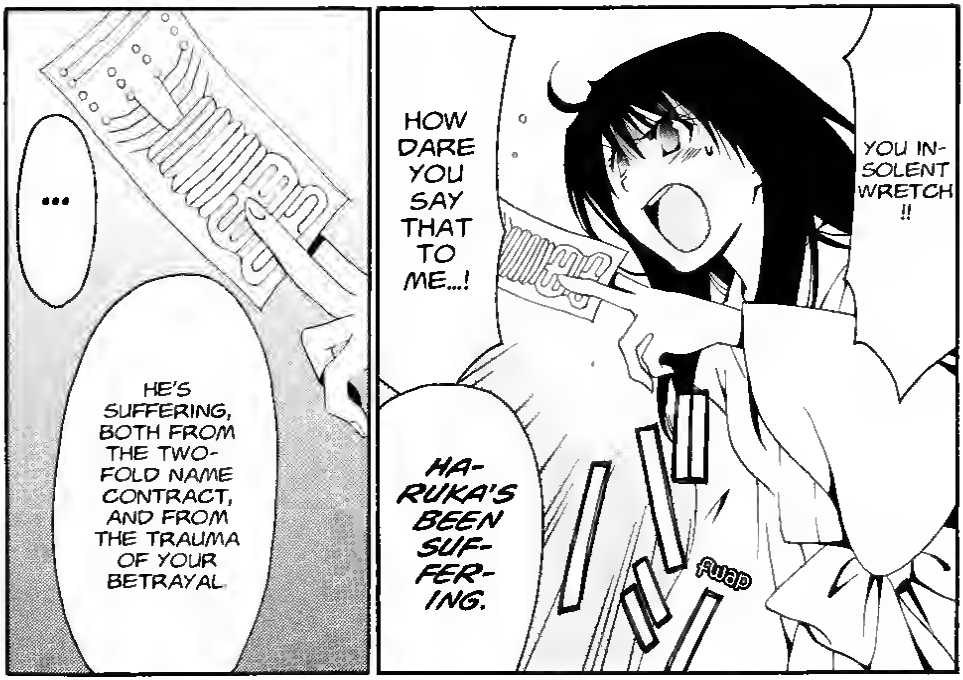
swish
fwoom
clench
LOOKS LIKE I CAN'T WIN BY USING THE SAME ONMYOU TALISMANS AGAINST HER...
Tchk!
!!
zing

DAMN YOU, MINAMOTO...!
PLEASE BE QUIET, MISTER DEMON EATER.
OHH, THANK GOOD-NESS! THE BUG'S STILL INSIDE SENSEI!
WHA...
KAN-TAROU ?!
stumble
HGCK!
COME ON...
I'M TRYING TO WATCH THE BATTLE HERE! ♡
IT'S NOT A GOOD IDEA TO MAKE A FUSS NEAR A LADY WHEN SHE'S ANGRY.
PROVOKING HER WON'T GET THE BUG OUT EITHER
wobble
THERE'S SOME-THING I'D LIKE TO SAY.
...!!


HAVING BEFRIENDED YOUKAI MYSELF, I CAN UNDERSTAND...
...WHY YOU WOULD WANT TO BE WITH HARUKA FOREVER.
BUT YOU MUSTN'T CROSS THAT BOUNDARY.
BREAKING THAT RULE IS PAINFUL FOR BOTH HUMANS AND YOUKAI.

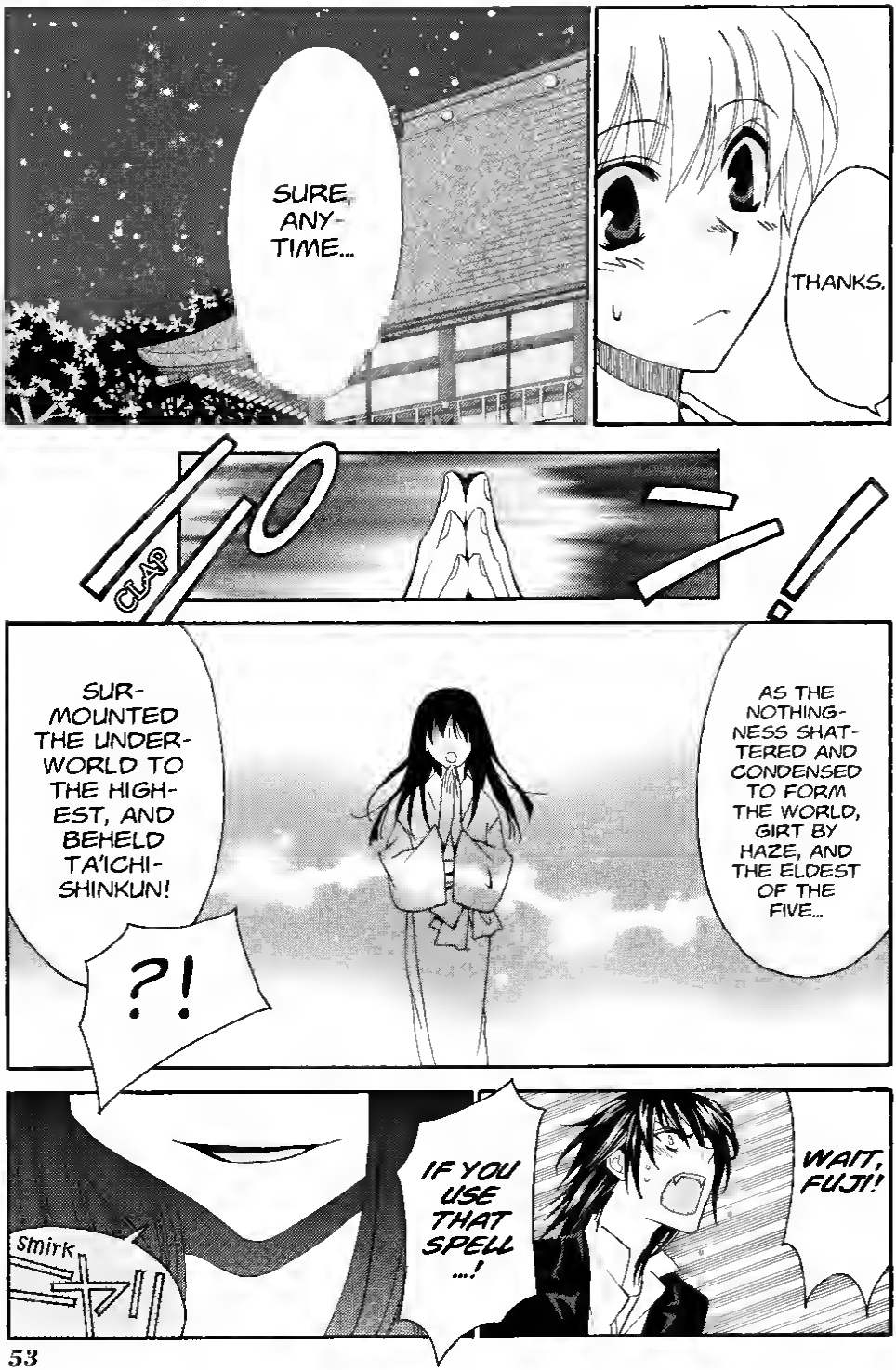

WHEN HARUKA TOLD ME ABOUT YOU, I WASN'T SURE WHAT TO THINK.
I WONDERED HOW MY FEELINGS WOULD CHANGE IF I ACTUALLY MET YOU...

Oh snap!
BUT HAVE YOU EVER ONCE CONSID-ERED HARUKA'S FEEL-INGS?
...
YOU...
grind...


...
HE'S SUFFERING, BOTH FROM THE TWO-FOLD NAME CONTRACT, AND FROM THE TRAUMA OF YOUR BETRAYAL.
HOW DARE YOU SAY THAT TO ME...!
HA-RUKA'S BEEN SUF-FER-ING.
YOU IN-SOLENT WRETCH !!
fuap

IF KNOWING THAT NOW, YOU CAN STILL COMMIT THESE DEEDS...
...THEN I CANNOT FORGIVE YOU.

SOMEONE LIKE YOU, WHO GIVES NO THOUGHT FOR HARUKA HIMSELF, IS UNFIT TO BE HIS MASTER!
Wha?!
YOU ROTTEN BITCH!!
bam
Bitch, eh?
pft
THAT WAS CLASSIC, KAN-TAROU.
Heh heh heh!
GOOD GRIEF ...
Hee hee
I'VE NEVER HEARD ANYONE SAY ANYTHING LIKE THAT TO FUJI..


SURE, ANY-TIME...
THANKS.
CLAP
AS THE NOTHING-NESS SHAT-TERED AND CONDENSED TO FORM THE WORLD, GIRT BY HAZE, AND THE ELDEST OF THE FIVE...
SUR-MOUNTED THE UNDER-WORLD TO THE HIGH-EST, AND BEHELD TA'ICHI-SHINKUN!
?!
Smirk
IF YOU USE THAT SPELL ...!
WAIT, FUJI!

zwa-zoom
Huff
Haah

WHAT'S HAP-PENED ...?
WAS THAT AN EARTH-QUAKE ...?
LORD SHUTEN ...
creeak
KIUNK
LORD SHUTEN ...
fwump
... PLEASE SAVE ME...
..FROM THAT WRETCHED HUMAN...!

dribble ゴポ
dribble ゴポ
SHU...

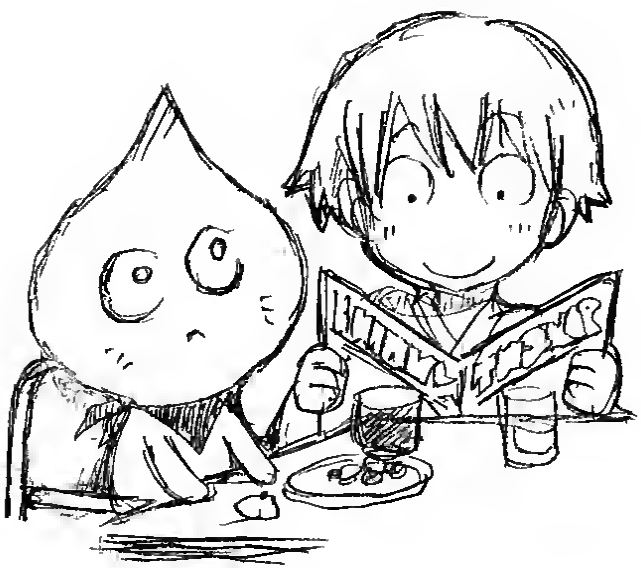
LORD SHUTEN DOUJI...!

Say, did you know?

Every time your voice resonates inside me, my passion overflows.

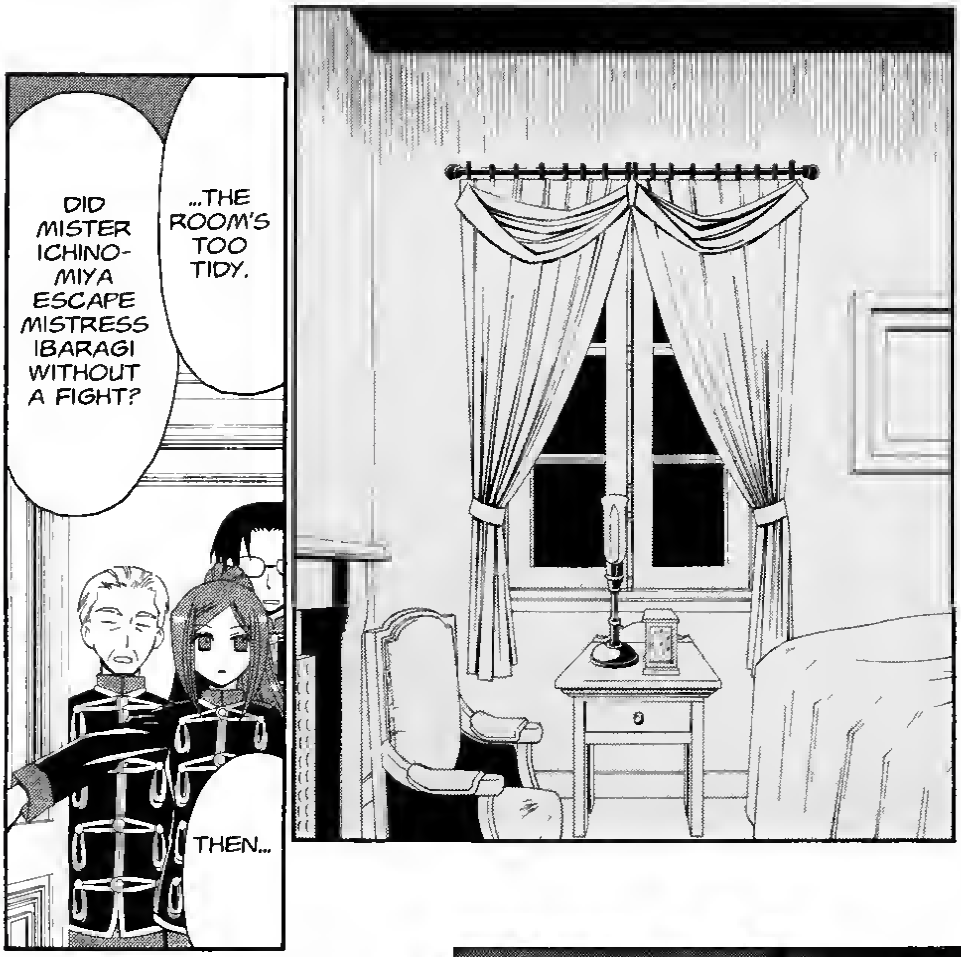
That power could be stronger than kotodama...

Memoirs of a Demon-Eating Tengu: The Fuji Tales
Jin Stage



tactics

rrruumble
AUGH...!
Clatter Clatter...
Clatter...
rattle
rattle
AN EARTH-QUAKE ?!
rattle
swish
IS IT OVER ...?
bam


...THE ROOM'S TOO TIDY.
DID MISTER ICHINO-MIYA ESCAPE MISTRESS IBARAGI WITHOUT A FIGHT?
THEN...

...WHERE HAS MISTRESS IBARAGI GONE?
FUJI...
...YOU...

O NOBLE AND DREADFUL TAIZAN FUKUN, BEFORE YOUR ALTAR
BY SUMMONING TAIZANFU-KUN, WHO GOVERNS LIFE AND DEATH, SHE CALLS SHUTEN'S SOUL...
...THEN BY ADDING THE ARCANE POWER OF TA'ICHISHIN-KUN, SHE CREATES SHUTEN'S BODY.
ONCE THOSE SPELLS ARE COMPLETE, SHUTEN DOUJI WILL BE RES-URRECTED INSIDE THE TREASURE HOUSE.
!
LADY FUJI, THE GENIUS ONMYOUJI, IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN PERFORM THESE TWO SPELLS.
THAT IS WHY WE ABSO-LUTELY HAD TO REVIVE HER.
BUT IT SEEMS THAT SHUTEN'S BODY IS NOT YET COM-PLETE.
THERE-FORE...

...I AM BORROWING THIS BODY.
IT'S NOT BAD FOR A SHORT STAY.
DEMON-EATING TENGU...
...HOW EXTREMELY DELIGHTFUL TO MEET YOU HERE.
I CAN REJOIN MY WORTHY RIVAL FROM LONG AGO... FOR A REMATCH.
AND AFTERWARDS, I'LL TOAST TO MY VICTORY WITH HUMAN BLOOD.
...!!

I AM SHUTEN DOUJI...
...RESUR-RECTED TO RAIN CALAMITY UPON THIS WORLD.

I WONDER HOW SHUTEN'S BODY IS COMING ALONG?
WHAT TO DO...
HUH? THE DOOR'S UN-LOCKED ...
THIS IS THE TREASURE HOUSE, WHICH CONTAINS NUMEROUS ARTICLES THAT HAVE BEEN PASSED DOWN THROUGH GENERATIONS OF THE MINA-MOTO CLAN.

Creak
WE NEED TO PUT AN END TO THIS FARCE, FOR ROSALIE-CHAN'S SAKE IF NOTHING ELSE.
COME ON, HARUKA.
...
smirk
IF YOU'D BE SO KIND? ♡
MAYBE SENSEI AND DEMON EATER SHOULD BE THE FIRST TO ENTER.

AUGH!
YOU SCARED ME!
NO...
KANTA-ROU?
BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE...
THIS LITTLE GUY...

ALL OF THEM...
...HAVE BEEN TAXI-DER-MIED?!

URGH ...!
IT REEKS OF DEATH ...
HARU-KA...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, HARUKA ...?
THIS ONE...
...IS TSU-GUMI-CHAN ?!

?!
slam
HARUKA, WHERE ARE YOU?!
HARU-KA?
blub
drips
ポポ
GLUB GLUB GLUB
...

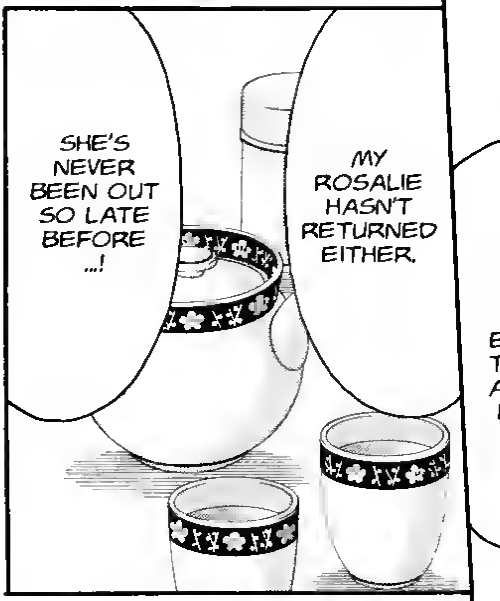
ARE THESE YOUKAI MOUNTS AND THAT REVOLTING HALF-FLESHED DEMON HEAD SUPPOSED TO BE YOUR TREASURES?
YOU COULD CALL IT MY GOBLIN COLLECTION. ANOTHER PERSON MIGHT CONSIDER THEM WORTHLESS, BUT TO ME THEY ARE MORE PRECIOUS THAN MY LIFE...
WELL, MINAMOTO?
ALL THESE MOUNTS ARE YOUKAI DEFEATED BY THE MINAMOTO CLAN.
THIS TREASURE HOUSE IS PROOF OF THE SUBSTANTIAL POWER OF THE MINAMOTO...
AND IT IS HERE THAT I WILL ACCOMPLISH THE GREAT FEAT THAT MY ANCESTORS COULD NOT:

MOUNTING THIS MOST LEGENDARY OF YOUKAI.
HIS MAJESTIC FORM WILL BE PRE-SERVED HERE FOR ALL ETERNITY.
THAT IS HOW I DEMON-STRATE MY LOVE FOR YOUKAI, ICHINOMIYA-SENSEI.
...KAN-TAROU...

SEE, I GOT TIRED OF WATCHING YOU PLAY-ACT FRIENDSHIP.
ADDING LADY FUJI TO THE MIX MADE THINGS WAY TOO SAPPY.
SO, ANYWAY ...
...I'VE DROPPED THE IDEA OF TAKING ON DEMON EATER IN HIS COMPLETE FORM.
ヒュ whizz
!
YOU DON'T MEAN ...?!

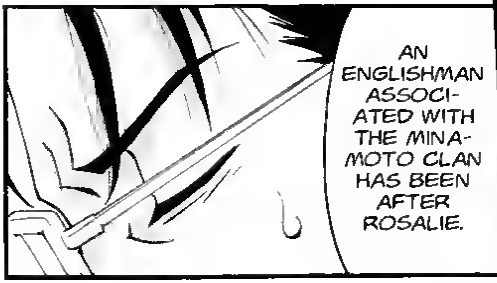
I'LL CONTENT MYSELF WITH THE DEMON EATER'S BODY, ALONG WITH THE BEAD INSIDE ♡
GSOOMS
AMONG MY MOUNT-ED YOUKAI...
...YOU'LL BE THE PRETTIEST OF THEM ALL, DEMON-EATING TENGU.
?!
ZHK
NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO TELL FROM YOUR HIDE JUST HOW FRAIL YOU REALLY WERE INSIDE.
KAN-TAROU...

drip
HELP ME...
...HA...
slash
HARUKA!


SHE'S NEVER BEEN OUT SO LATE BEFORE ...!
MY ROSALIE HASN'T RETURNED EITHER.

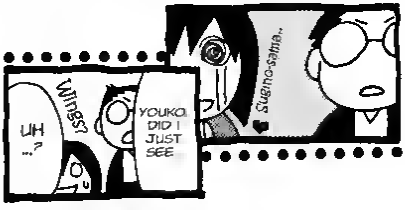
SAY WHAT?!
KANTA-ROU GOT KIDNAPPED, DEMON EATER WENT TO SAVE HIM, AND NEITHER HAVE COME BACK YET?

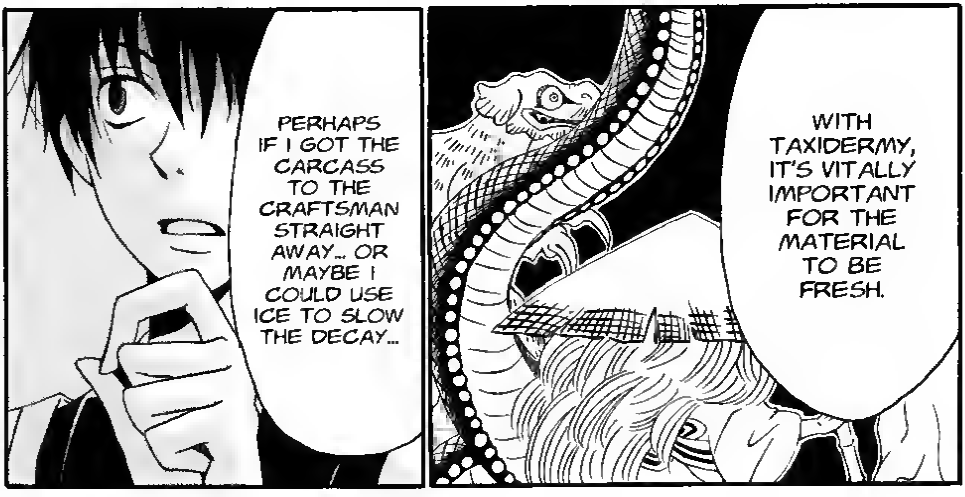
What?! Muu-chan, do you seriously like that guy?!
nod
I'M NOT LAUGH-ING! SHUT UP, YOU OLD FOGY!!
SHEESH, I COME TO VISIT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN AGES, AND EVERY-THING'S A MESS...
MUU MUU!
DON'T LAUGH ABOUT MY MISSING DAUGH-TER!!


AN ENGLISHMAN ASSOCI-ATED WITH THE MINA-MOTO CLAN HAS BEEN AFTER ROSALIE.

I'M GOING TO THE MINAMOTO RESIDENCE TO GET THEM.
I'LL COME WITH YOU!
SINCE SHE HASN'T RETURNED YET, THERE'S A HIGH PROBABILITY THAT HE FINALLY GOT HER.
IF ICHINOMIYA AND HARUKA ARE AT THE MINAMOTO RESIDENCE, PERHAPS WE CAN MEET UP AND BRING HER HOME TOGETHER.
YOU'LL BE DEAD WEIGHT.
How direct!!
Bull's-eye!
Right down the middle!
WELL, THOSE TWO HAVE A BAD HABIT OF LEAPING BEFORE THEY LOOK.
THEY NEED TO REALIZE THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO WORRY ABOUT THEM!
...
HUH?
swish
...I'LL GO.

I'M NOT EXACTLY A STRANGER TO THE MINAMOTO CLAN.
Flap
AND I'M DEFINITELY NOT INTERESTED IN LETTING THAT PARTICULAR PIECE OF HISTORY REPEAT ITSELF. NO THANK YOU.


Sugino-sama...
YOUKO, DID I JUST SEE...
Wings?
UH ...?


WITH TAXIDERMY, IT'S VITALLY IMPORTANT FOR THE MATERIAL TO BE FRESH.
PERHAPS IF I GOT THE CARCASS TO THE CRAFTSMAN STRAIGHT AWAY... OR MAYBE I COULD USE ICE TO SLOW THE DECAY...

sssst
YOU TRYING TO STOP ME?
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO STOP ME, SENSEI, WHEN YOU WON'T EVEN LISTEN TO MY REQUEST.
MINAMOTO!
BUT THE BEST OPTION IS TO PROCESS A CREATURE WHILE IT'S STILL ALIVE.
HARUKA...!
IT HURTS.
HELP ME.
grit
URGH!
PLEASE HELP ME.
IT HURTS.
KANTAROU
IT HURTS.

I CAN'T GET OUT...!
ギュギュ
SKTTK
KTTK
GAH ...!
...
REVOKE MY NAME...
...KAN-TAROU.
HARU-KA...?
JUST FOR NOW.
THAT WILL RELEASE THE RE-STRAINTS OF MY DOUBLE CONTRACT, AND THEN I CAN BREAK LOOSE...

GIVE ME STRENGTH, KAN-TAROU...!
...
DE...
"DEMON-EATING TENGU, HARUKA ...
...!, KANTAROU ICHINO-MIYA, HEREBY DECLARE THY NAME CON-TRACT..."
ニヤ
smirk

...TO BE...
RE-NEWED.
Om kirikushuyari bikiritadah-ouuh.
THE HECK ?!
?!

rip
WHAT A SHAME. YOU'D NEARLY FINISHED REVOKING THE NAME CONTRACT THROUGH KOTODAMA.
YOU ARE THE FIRST HUMAN TO EVER SEE THROUGH ONE OF MY ILLUSIONS.
HOW WERE YOU ABLE TO DO IT?
HOW? IT WAS OBVIOUS.

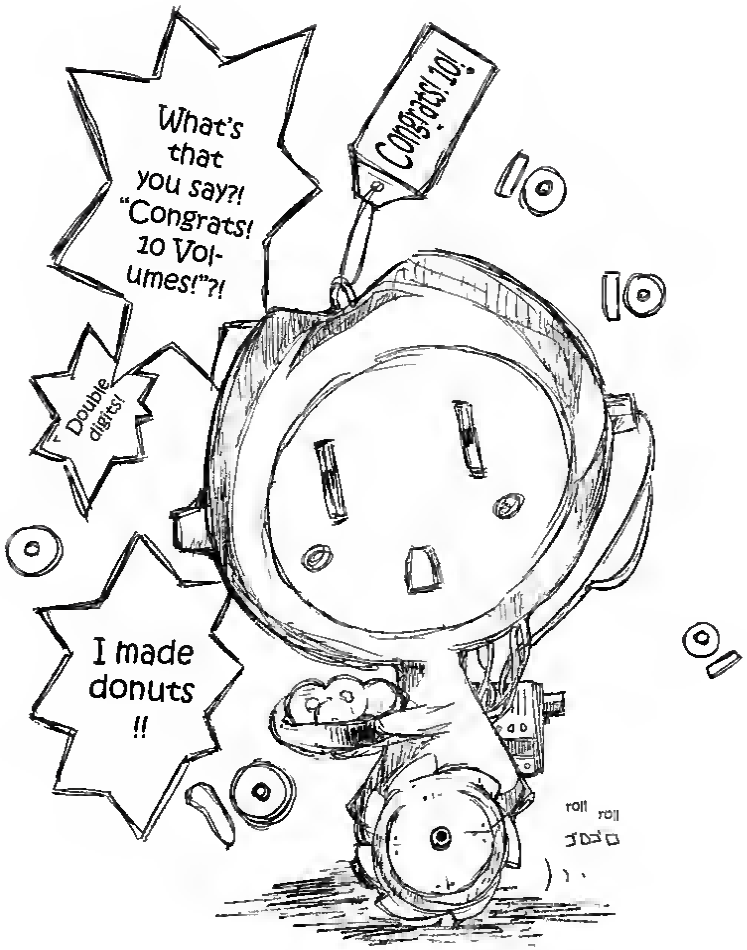
AH, I SEE. YOU ARE QUITE AN INTERESTING HUMAN.
TRY DOING SOME RESEARCH BEFORE YOU START MAKING STUFF UP.
DEMON-EATING TENGU HARUKA WOULD NEVER SAY "HELP ME," NOT EVEN TO SAVE HIS OWN LIFE.
...
FUJI...
IT MAY SOUND UNFAIR OF ME TO SAY IT LIKE THIS...
BUT PLEASE ...

DON'T MAKE ME HATE YOU EVEN MORE.

RIN, YOUR WORDS...
...ARE EVEN SHARPER THAN KOTO-DAMA...

LADY FUJI!
WHY IS YOUR GRACIOUS-NESS HERE...?
OH?
FOR A SUMMON-ING.
I'M SUMMONING MY BEAUTI-FUL...
...BLACK-WINGED BIRD.

Memoirs of a Demon-Eating Tengu: The Fuji Tales
Retsu Stage


What's that you say?! "Congrats! 10 Volumes!"?!
Congrats! 10!
Double digits!
I made donuts !!

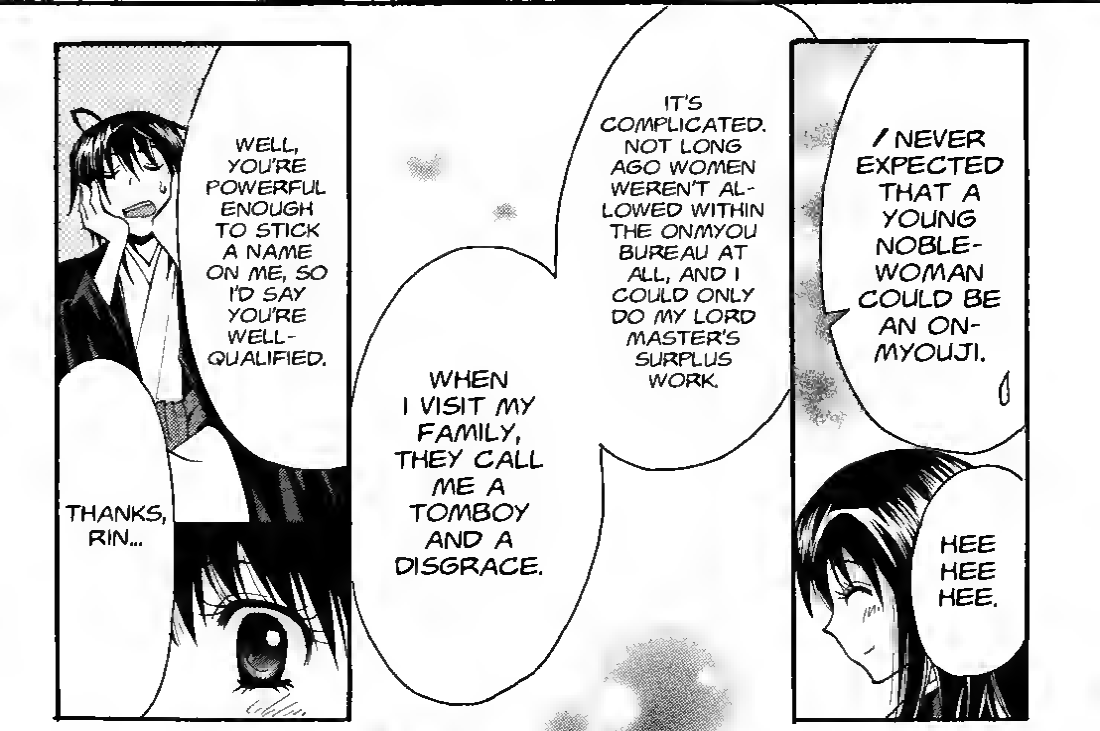
tactics

swabam
URGH ...!
Haa
Haa
Haa
hrgk
?!
DEMON-EATING... TENGU!
WHY?
WHY DO YOU FIGHT... A FELLOW YOUKAI?
smack
GAAH!

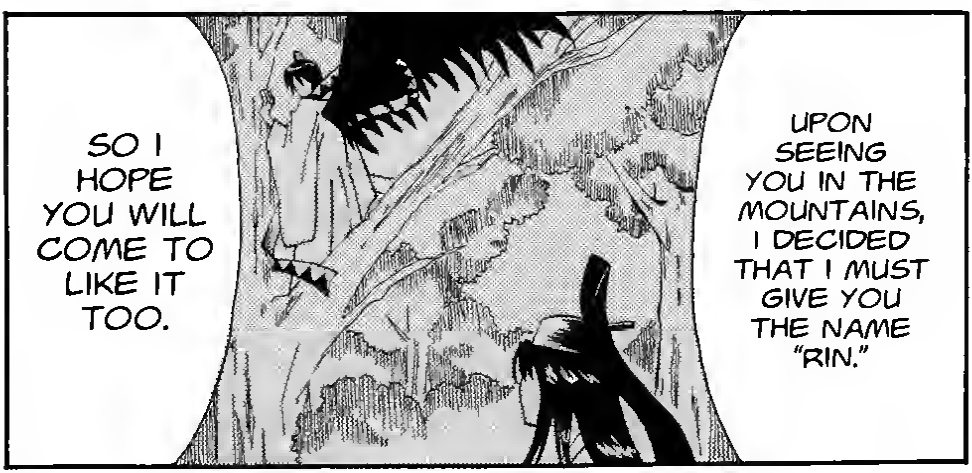
BECAUSE I'M NOW SUB-ORDINATE TO THAT SORCERER.
YOUKAI WHO BRINGS CALAMITY DOWN UPON HUMANITY.
fwoom
IN THE NAME OF THE GODS, I SLAY YOU!

OH, RIN!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE STILL NOT USED TO WATCHING YOUKAI BE SLAIN.
THAT YOUKAI WAS WICKED, SO I HAD TO DESTROY IT.
NO, I'M JUST ANNOYED THAT I DIDN'T GET TO EAT A DEMON, AGAIN...
OH.
stroke
Wicked...
WHAT.
TEE HEE.

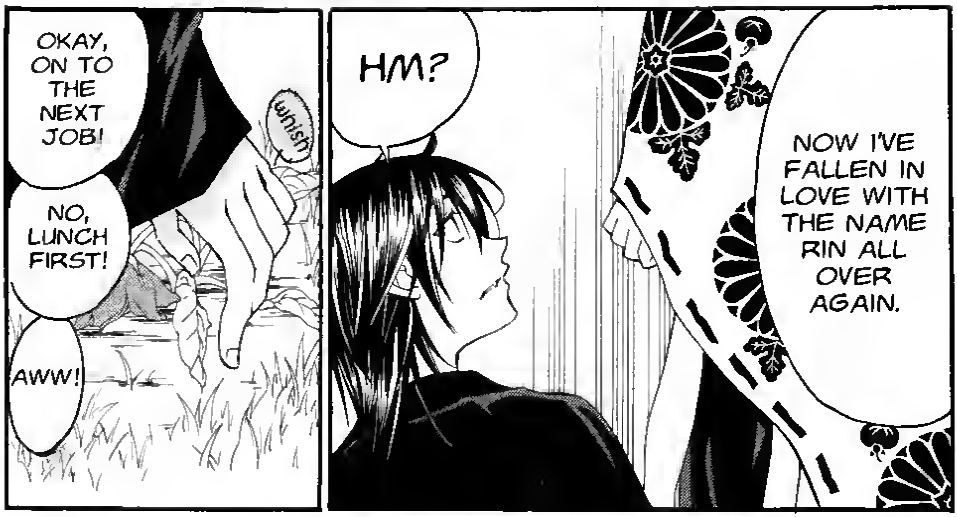
I NEVER EXPECTED THE LEGENDARY DEMON-EATING TENGU TO BE SO GENTLE.
DON'T MAKE FUN OF ME...
IT'S A COMPLI-MENT!
EVEN SO!


I NEVER EXPECTED THAT A YOUNG NOBLE-WOMAN COULD BE AN ON-MYOUJI.
HEE HEE HEE.
IT'S COMPLICATED. NOT LONG AGO WOMEN WEREN'T AL-LOWED WITHIN THE ONMYOU BUREAU AT ALL, AND I COULD ONLY DO MY LORD MASTER'S SURPLUS WORK.
WHEN I VISIT MY FAMILY, THEY CALL ME A TOMBOY AND A DISGRACE.
WELL, YOU'RE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO STICK A NAME ON ME, SO I'D SAY YOU'RE WELL-QUALIFIED.
THANKS, RIN...

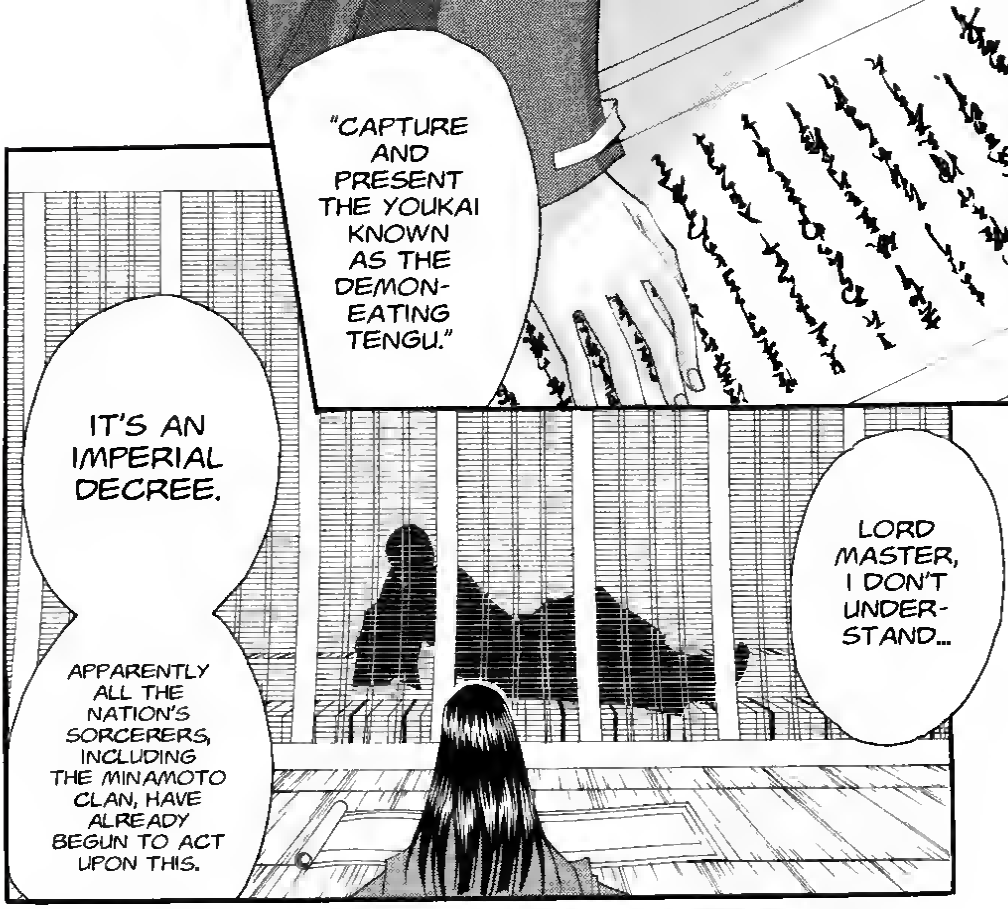
SAY, RIN...
DO YOU LIKE YOUR NAME?
I DON'T REALLY KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT IT YET.
YOUR "RIN" IS WRITTEN THE SAME AS THE FIRST WORD IN THE KUJI SPELL.
IT'S ALSO THE WORD FOR THE INCARNATION OF THE GODS I WORSHIP, SO FOR ME IT IS VERY PRECIOUS.

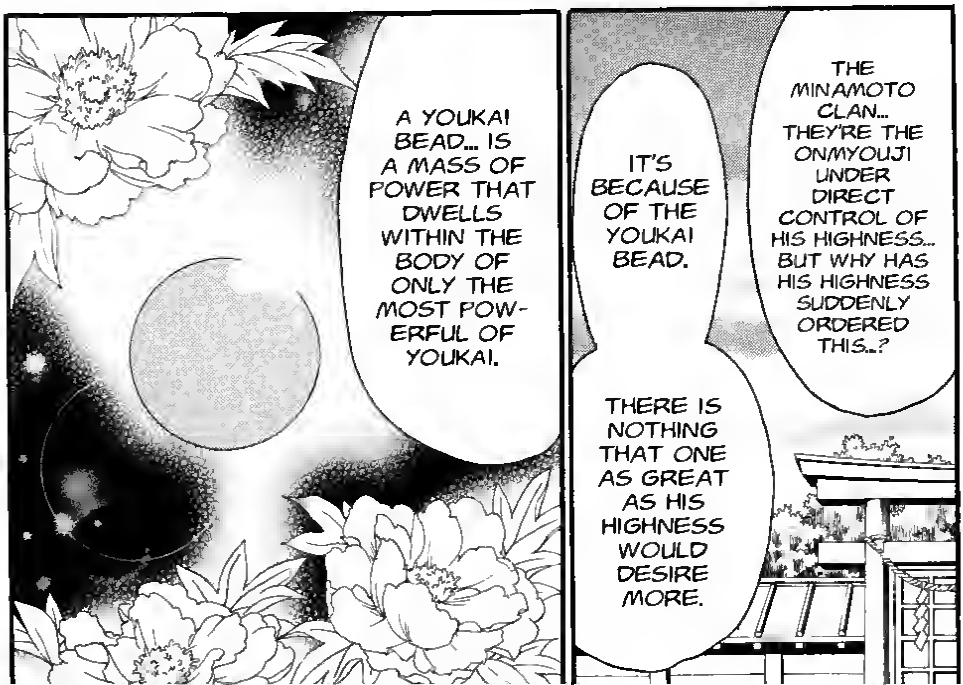

UPON SEEING YOU IN THE MOUNTAINS, I DECIDED THAT I MUST GIVE YOU THE NAME "RIN."
SO I HOPE YOU WILL COME TO LIKE IT TOO.

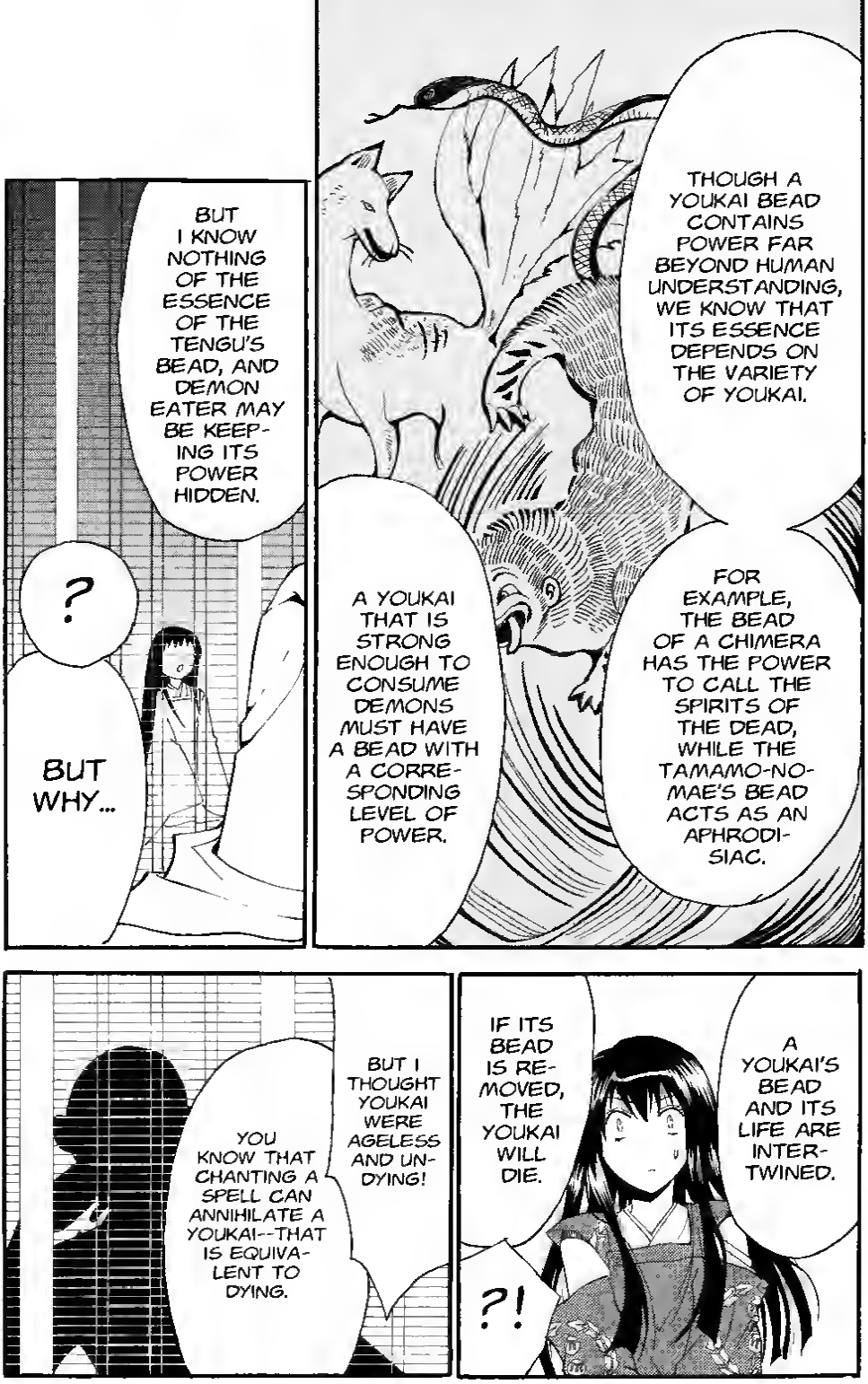
...RIN, YOUR MANNER CAN DEFINITELY GIVE RISE TO FALSE IMPRES-SIONS...
THE HELL?
What's that supposed to mean?
WELL, I COULD NEVER HATE A NAME THAT YOU PUT SO MUCH THOUGHT INTO.

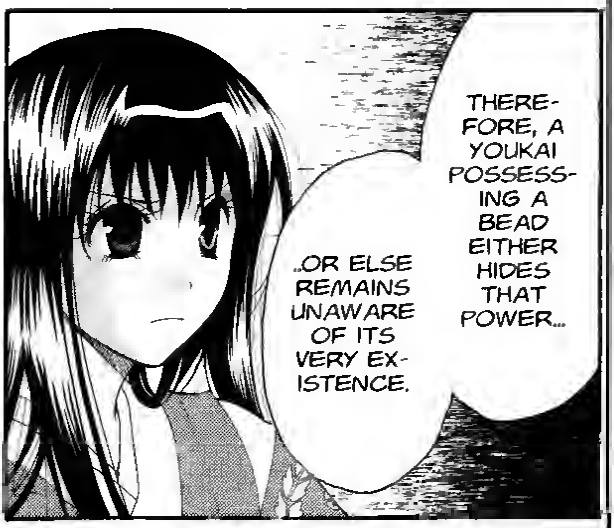

OKAY, ON TO THE NEXT JOB!
NO, LUNCH FIRST!
AWW!
shunn
HM?
NOW I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH THE NAME RIN ALL OVER AGAIN.

WHAT...
...WHAT IS THIS?


"CAPTURE AND PRESENT THE YOUKAI KNOWN AS THE DEMON-EATING TENGU."
IT'S AN IMPERIAL DECREE.
APPARENTLY ALL THE NATION'S SORCERERS, INCLUDING THE MINAMOTO CLAN, HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO ACT UPON THIS.
LORD MASTER, I DON'T UNDER-STAND...


A YOUKAI BEAD... IS A MASS OF POWER THAT DWELLS WITHIN THE BODY OF ONLY THE MOST POW-ERFUL OF YOUKAI.
IT'S BECAUSE OF THE YOUKAI BEAD.
THERE IS NOTHING THAT ONE AS GREAT AS HIS HIGHNESS WOULD DESIRE MORE.
THE MINAMOTO CLAN... THEY'RE THE ONMYOUJI UNDER DIRECT CONTROL OF HIS HIGHNESS... BUT WHY HAS HIS HIGHNESS SUDDENLY ORDERED THIS...?


THOUGH A YOUKAI BEAD CONTAINS POWER FAR BEYOND HUMAN UNDERSTANDING, WE KNOW THAT ITS ESSENCE DEPENDS ON THE VARIETY OF YOUKAI.
FOR EXAMPLE, THE BEAD OF A CHIMERA HAS THE POWER TO CALL THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD, WHILE THE TAMAMO-NO-MAE'S BEAD ACTS AS AN APHRODISIAC.
A YOUKAI THAT IS STRONG ENOUGH TO CONSUME DEMONS MUST HAVE A BEAD WITH A CORRESPONDING LEVEL OF POWER.
BUT I KNOW NOTHING OF THE ESSENCE OF THE TENGU'S BEAD, AND DEMON EATER MAY BE KEEPING ITS POWER HIDDEN.
?
BUT WHY...
A YOUKAI'S BEAD AND ITS LIFE ARE INTERTWINED.
IF ITS BEAD IS REMOVED, THE YOUKAI WILL DIE.
?!
BUT I THOUGHT YOUKAI WERE AGELESS AND UNDYING!
YOU KNOW THAT CHANTING A SPELL CAN ANNIHILATE A YOUKAI--THAT IS EQUIVALENT TO DYING.



HOWEVER, IF A YOUKAI POSSESSES A BEAD, THEN SO LONG AS ITS BEAD IS NOT TAKEN FROM ITS BODY, THE YOUKAI'S SOUL CANNOT BE ANNIHILATED.

JUDGING FROM YOUR REACTION, THE LATTER MAY BE THE CASE FOR DEMON EATER.
NOW, AS FOR WHO COULD HAVE OBTAINED INFORMATION ABOUT THAT BEAD...

I ALONE KNOW THAT DEMON EATER IS YOUR SERVANT...
YOU SHOULD LEAVE HIM IN MY CHARGE FOR THE TIME BEING...
..BUT IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE OTHER SORCERERS DISCOVER THAT FACT.
whizzt

IN PARTICULAR, THE YOUKAI'S "BEAD"--ITS SOURCE OF POWER--BECOMES THE PROOF OF ITS EXISTENCE.

I WON'T HAND HIM OVER.
HE IS MINE.
I DON'T CARE WHO ELSE MAY LAY CLAIM.
YOU'D GO AGAINST A DIRECT ORDER FROM HIS HIGH-NESS?
...
I UNDER-STAND HOW PRECIOUS DEMON EATER IS TO YOU, BUT NOT ALL WISHES MAY BE GRANTED.
I CARE ABOUT YOU. YOU'RE MY ONE AND ONLY SUC-CESSOR, WHOM I'VE ENTRUSTED WITH MY SECRET SPELLS... I DON'T WANT YOU TO THROW YOUR LIFE AWAY.
FUJI!
DO NOT WALK THIS PATH OF RUINATION!

I RESPECT YOUR COUNSEL, LORD MASTER...
...BUT MY WISHES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN GRANTED.
MUCH THE WAY THAT I ALONE COULD INHERIT THOSE SECRET SPELLS, THE TAIZANFUKUN AND THE TA'ICHISHIN-KUN.
WHAT A FOOL YOU ARE.

OH MY.
WHAT A LARGE FEATH-ER.
I'VE NEVER SEEN ITS LIKE BEFORE ...
I WONDER WHAT BIRD IT CAME FROM?
sullen むっすー
AWW, RIN, ARE YOU STILL ANGRY?
YOU KNOW THAT I HATE BEING COOPED UP LIKE THIS!
YOU NEVER LISTEN! EXTEND THE BAR-RIER!
DIDN'T I EXPLAIN IT TO YOU WELL ENOUGH ?!

IF THEY CATCH YOU, WE MAY NEVER MEET AGAIN...
...BE CAUSE THE MOST POWERFUL PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRY ARE AFTER YOU!
YOU'RE NOT COOPED UP, YOU'RE IN HIDING...
...WHAT?
YOU AND I HAVE DIFFERENT LIFE-SPANS, SO YOU WILL PROBABLY DIE BEFORE ME.
OUR SEPARATION IS INEVITABLE.
THAT'S BOUND TO HAPPEN SOONER OR LATER
I CAN'T ...!
I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU, RIN!
YOU HAVE TO BE RESIGNED TO THAT FACT.
OUR FLOW OF TIME CANNOT BE CHANGED.

AFTER WE MET, AFTER I FINALLY NAMED YOU...
I REFUSE TO LET THE FLOW OF TIME PULL US APART...!!
drip
drop
FUJI...?
SOME-ONE ELSE...
WILL YOU TALK TO SOMEONE OTHER THAN ME? WILL YOU TOUCH THEM?
...
SO, RIN, WHAT WILL YOUR LIFE BE LIKE AFTER I'M GONE?
plip
plip
I DON'T WANT YOU TO LEAVE MY SIDE!
I CAN'T ALLOW EITHER LIFESPAN OR FATE TO HAVE THEIR WAY!!

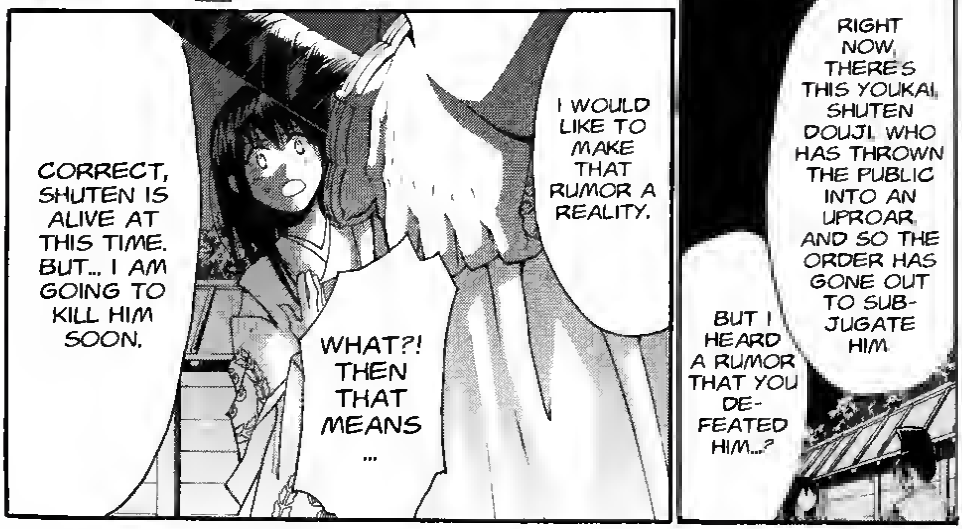
WILL SOMEONE ELSE BECOME YOUR MASTER?
WILL THEY GIVE YOU SOME OTHER NAME BESIDES "RIN"?
NO...
NOOO...
OW...!
squeeze
FUJI...? WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO ...?
BECAUSE...
shff
WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN ...

YOU ARE MINE, RIN! ALL MINE!!
swap
!!
WHAT... HAVE I DONE...
HOW COULD I HURT RIN...?!
Ah!
swwft
zuuu
wiiz

WHAT INSO-LENCE!
SHOW YOUR-SELF AT ONCE!
fuoom
gulp
Heh heh!
MI...
STILL PLAYING THE TOMBOY, EH, LADY FUJI?
MINA-MOTO NO RAIKOU ...!

I CAME TO MEET YOUR PRECIOUS BLACK BIRD.
...FUJI...
WHAT THE HECK'S WRONG, YOU'RE NOT ACTING LIKE YOUR-SELF.
Ow ow ow...
Creak

!
YOU'RE A NOISY CHILD.
IF YOU HAVE WORRIES, TELL ME ABOUT THEM...
HAVEN'T I ALWAYS SILENCED YOU THIS WAY?
A DEAL?
RIN.


RIGHT NOW, THERE'S THIS YOUKAI, SHUTEN DOUJI, WHO HAS THROWN THE PUBLIC INTO AN UPROAR. AND SO THE ORDER HAS GONE OUT TO SUB-JUGATE HIM.
BUT I HEARD A RUMOR THAT YOU DE-FEATED HIM...?
I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THAT RUMOR A REALITY.
WHAT?! THEN THAT MEANS ...
CORRECT, SHUTEN IS ALIVE AT THIS TIME. BUT... I AM GOING TO KILL HIM SOON.

AND THEN, AFTER ENOUGH TIME HAS PASSED, I WANT YOU TO USE THE SECRET SPELLS THAT YOU ALONE HAVE IN-HERITED...
..."TAIZAN-FUKUN" AND "TA'ICHISHIN-KUN," TO RESURRECT SHUTEN.

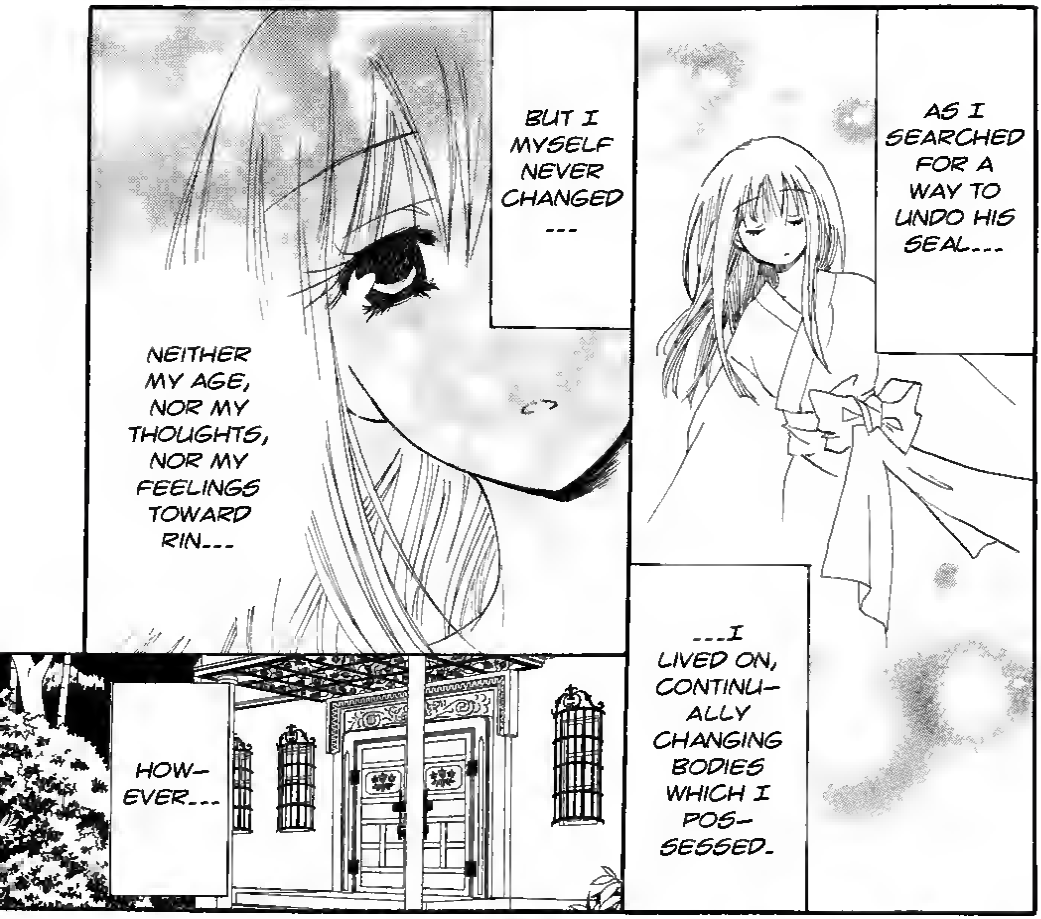
WHAT ARE YOU PEOPLE TRYING ...?
MY MASTER HAS FOR-BIDDEN ME TO USE THOSE SPELLS.
WHA ...?
IF YOU COMPLY WITH OUR WISH, I WILL GRANT YOUR WISH AS WELL.
THEN YOU WON'T HAND RIN OVER TO HIS HIGH-NESS?!
CORRECT. BUT IS THAT REALLY ALL THAT YOU DESIRE?
WHAT?

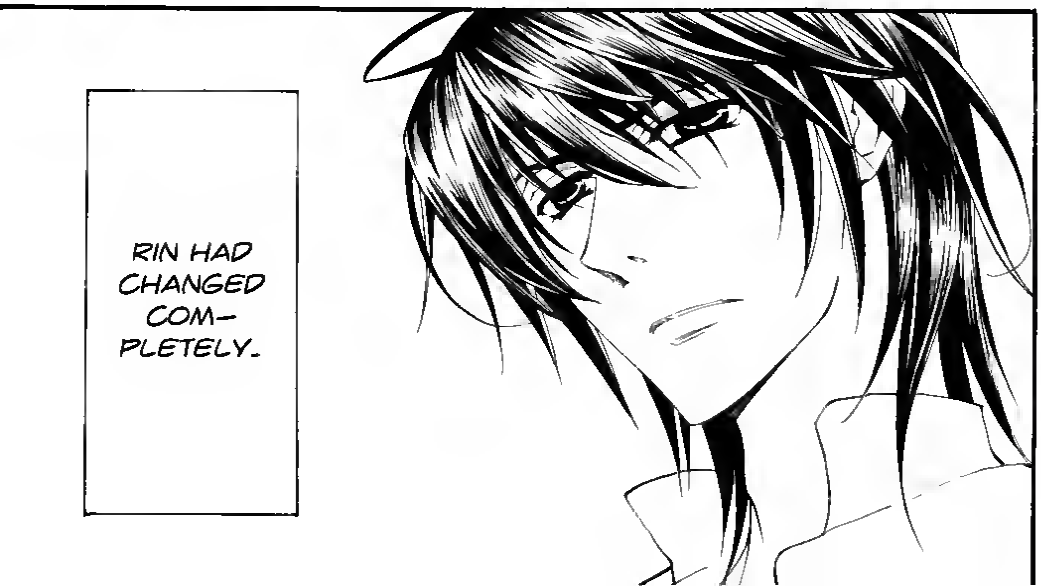
WERE YOU NOT AWARE?
SHUTEN DOUJI'S BEAD HAS THE POWER TO MAKE A SOUL LAST ETERNALLY ...
IT "STOPS TIME."

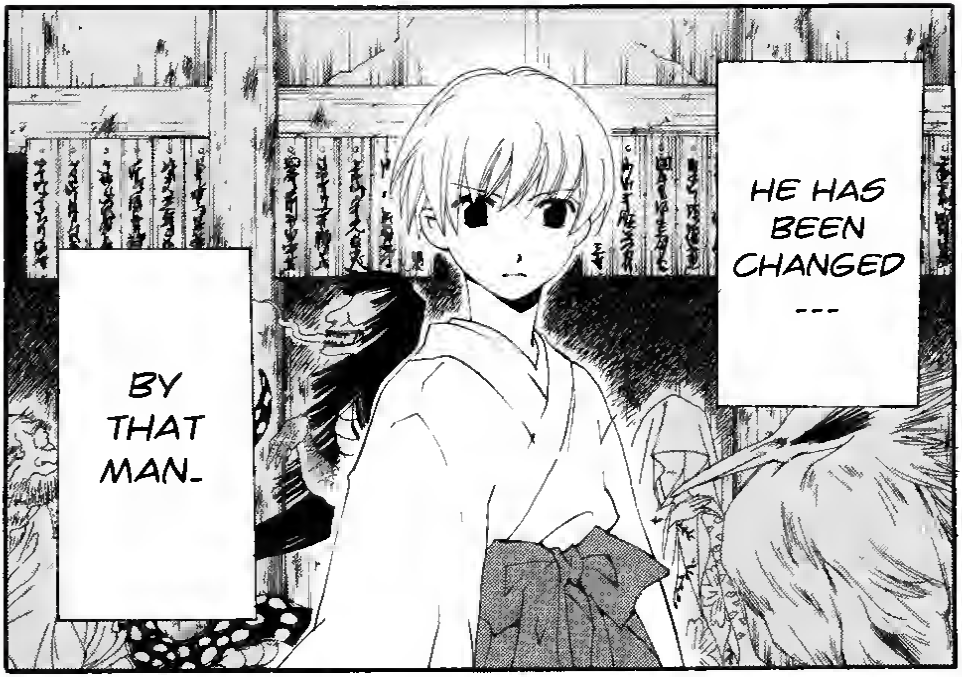
MY WISH WILL BE GRANTED, WITHOUT FAIL.
I'M SORRY, RIN. PLEASE BE PATIENT JUST A WHILE LONGER, OKAY?
I'M WORKING HARD FOR THE FUTURE WE WILL SHARE TOGETHER FOREVER.
ONCE THE IMPERIAL DECREE HAS ENDED, I'LL RELEASE YOU RIGHT AWAY.
IT'S TIME TO GO, LADY FUJI.
YES.

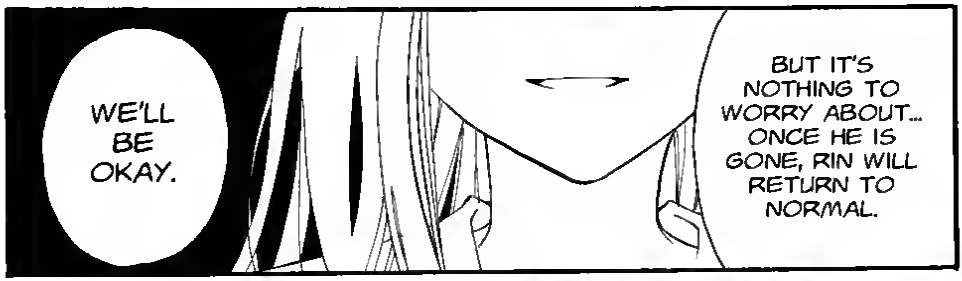
shluck

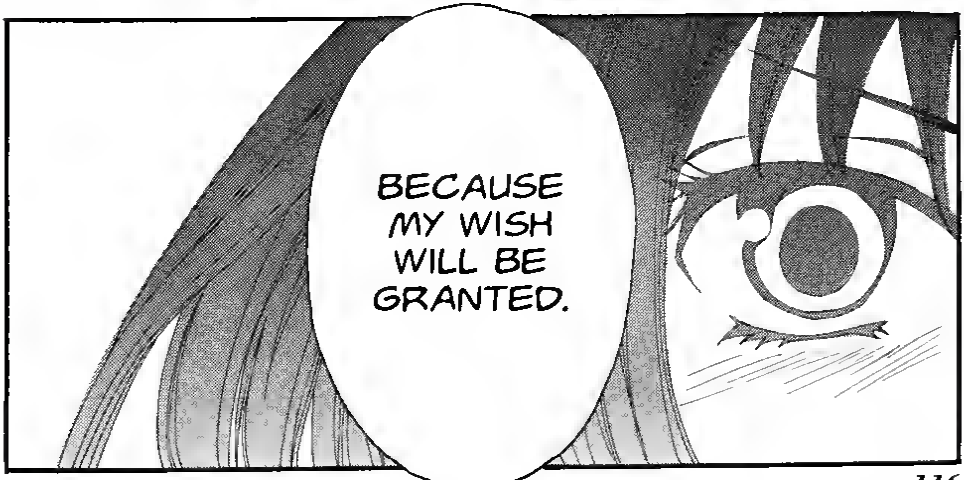
HOWEVER, I WAS UNABLE TO BREAK THAT SEAL...
FOR SOME REASON, RIN'S SEAL HAD BECOME IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO UNDO.

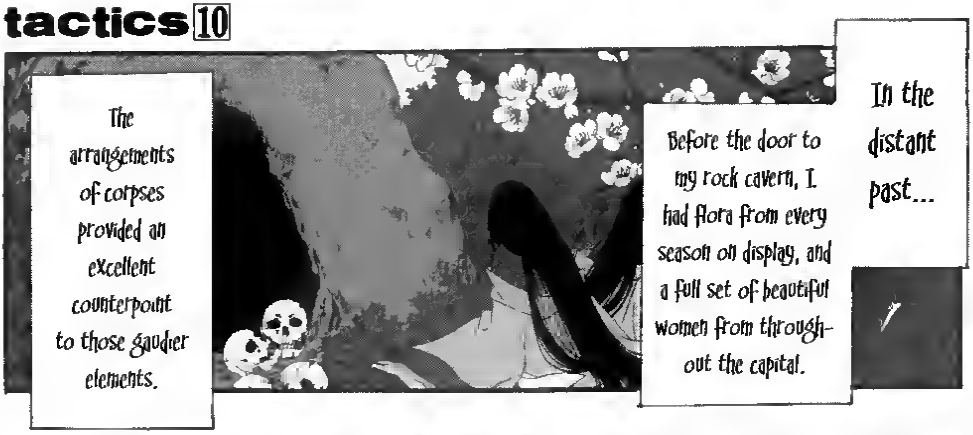

AS I SEARCHED FOR A WAY TO UNDO HIS SEAL...
BUT I MYSELF NEVER CHANGED ---
NEITHER MY AGE, NOR MY THOUGHTS, NOR MY FEELINGS TOWARD RIN...
...I LIVED ON, CONTINU-ALLY CHANGING BODIES WHICH I POS-SESSED.
HOW-EVER...


RIN HAD CHANGED COM-PLETELY.

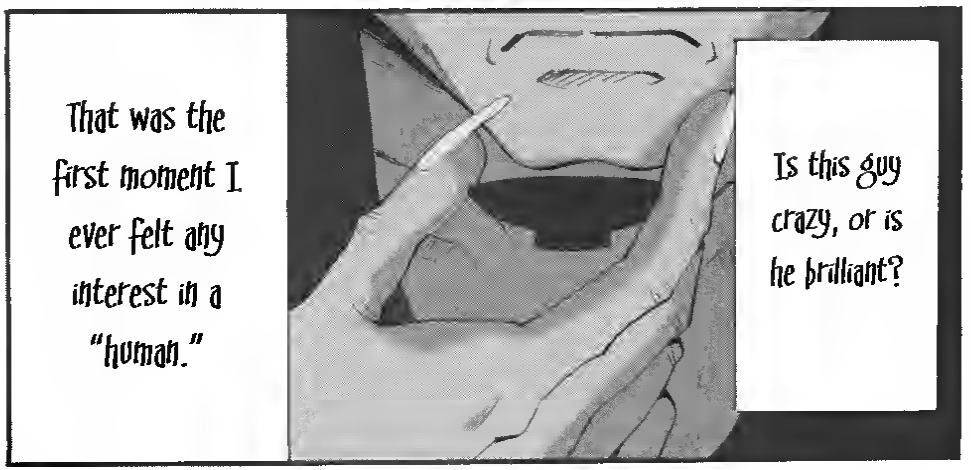

HE HAS BEEN CHANGED ---
BY THAT MAN.


WE'LL BE OKAY.
BUT IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT... ONCE HE IS GONE, RIN WILL RETURN TO NORMAL.


BECAUSE MY WISH WILL BE GRANTED.


In the distant past...
Before the door to my rock cavern, I had flora from every season on display, and a full set of beautiful women from throughout the capital.
The arrangements of corpses provided an excellent counterpoint to those gaudier elements.

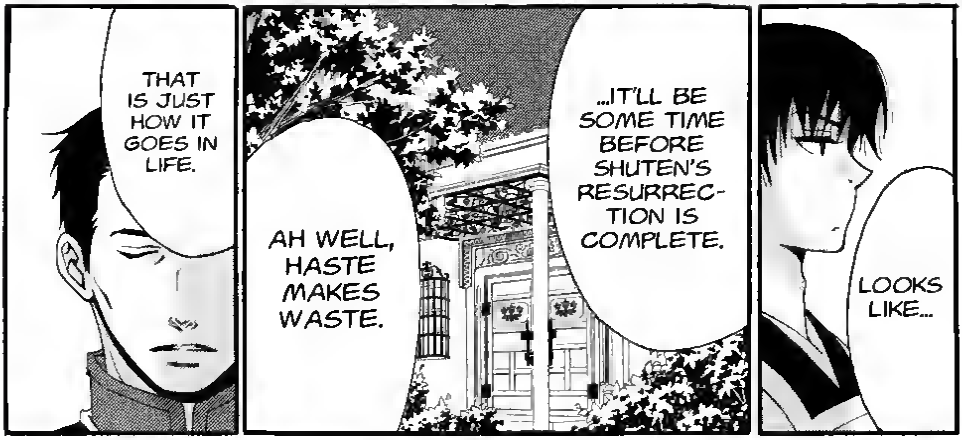
One day, that man, who could not mask his enormous spiritual power, spoke these words to me.
SHUTEN DOUJI...
I WANT TO ACQUIRE THE DEMON-EATING TENGU. JOIN ME.


Is this guy crazy, or is he brilliant?
That was the first moment I ever felt any interest in a "human."

Kinoshita-Style Postscript

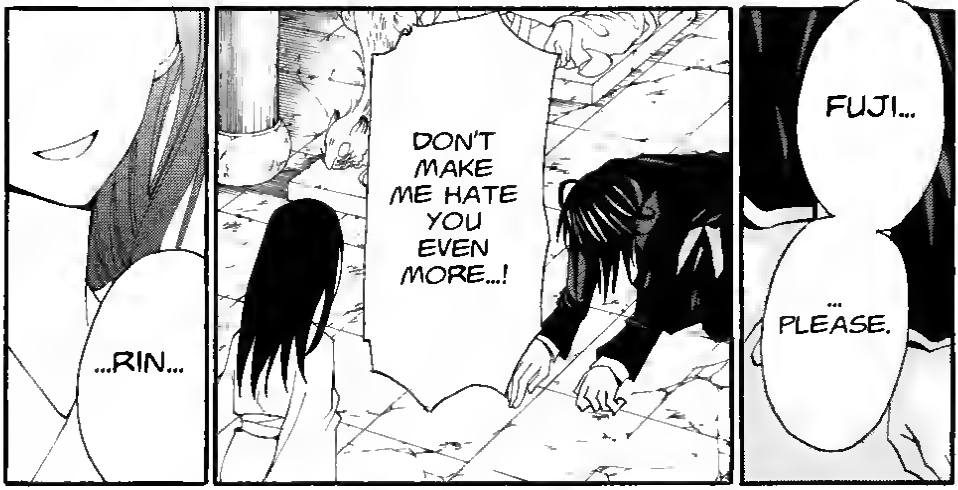
So this is tactics volume 10.
Looks like we've ridden all the way
up to the double-digit level,
but I still don't feel like stopping yet.
Just a bit longer.
I'll keep it cool and work hard to stay
in practice... ☺ ☺

2008
Sakura
Kinoshita


LOOKS LIKE...
...IT'LL BE SOME TIME BEFORE SHUTEN'S RESURRECTION IS COMPLETE.
AH WELL, HASTE MAKES WASTE.
THAT IS JUST HOW IT GOES IN LIFE.

HMM?

...
WELL
...
YOUR ARM GOT REPLACED BY SHUTEN'S ARM...
DO YOU SUPPOSE YOUR LIFE WOULD BE HAPPIER, IF YOU WERE TO GIVE IT BACK?
I BELIEVE THAT FEELINGS OF HAPPINESS CAN CHANGE DEPENDING ON ONE'S OUTLOOK.
ALTHOUGH LADY FUJI'S ACHIEVED THE REUNION HER HEART DESIRES...
OH, I SEE.
...SHE'S BEEN WEARING THIS PAINED LOOK ON HER FACE. THERE MAY BE SOMETHING TO WHAT YOU SAY.
FUJI...


...RIN...
DON'T MAKE ME HATE YOU EVEN MORE...!
FUJI...
... PLEASE.

AND SO, KANTAROU ICHINOMIYA MUST...
DIE.
FUJI!

NOW I SEE...
YOU WILL ONLY BECOME MY RIN AGAIN WHEN THAT MAN IS GONE.

IF YOU ...
IF YOU LAY ONE FINGER ON KAN-TAROU, I'LL...
WHO CARES IF YOU SUFFER ?!
I'M SUFFER-ING NOW!
AND THAT FEELING WON'T GO AWAY UNTIL I SEVER THIS MAN'S LIFE!
DAMMIT, FUJI, GIVE IT A REST...
clunk
?!

MY BODY SITS BEHIND YOU.
TO YOUR LEFT IS RAIKOU MINA-MOTO ...
TO YOUR RIGHT, LADY FUJI...
AND HERE WE HAVE...
BEFORE YOU IS I... SHUTEN DOUJI.

IBA-RAGI...
LORD SHUTEN ...
I'M...
tremble
tremble
...I'M AFRAID... LORD SHUTEN ...
...
IN MY WHOLE LIFE...
I NEVER EXPECTED I WOULD TAKE INTEREST IN A HUMAN A SECOND TIME.
KAN-TAROU ICHINO-MIYA.

SUCH A CALM AND COLLECTED MANNER, UNDER SUCH UNFAVORABLE CONDITIONS...
YET YOUR EYES ARE BRIMMING WITH TENSION AND BELLIGERENCE.
I'D PREFER ...
I float
...TO SEE THOSE EYES STAINED WITH THE COLOR OF FEAR.
KAN-TAROU !!

?!
bam
THAT SOUND ...!
bam
bam
IS THE ANTI-YOUKAI BARRIER AROUND THE MINAMOTO RESIDENCE BEING BROKEN?!
BUT THAT COULD ONLY BE DONE BY...

!
CRASH!
thud
whack
bam
roooaar
SUGINO ?!
DEMON EATER!! KANTAROU!! HOW'S IT HANGIN'?!
Youko's pissed by the way!
I SEE SOME OTHER FAMILIAR FACES WITH US THIS TIME.
THEY REALLY MAKE ME WANNA PUKE.

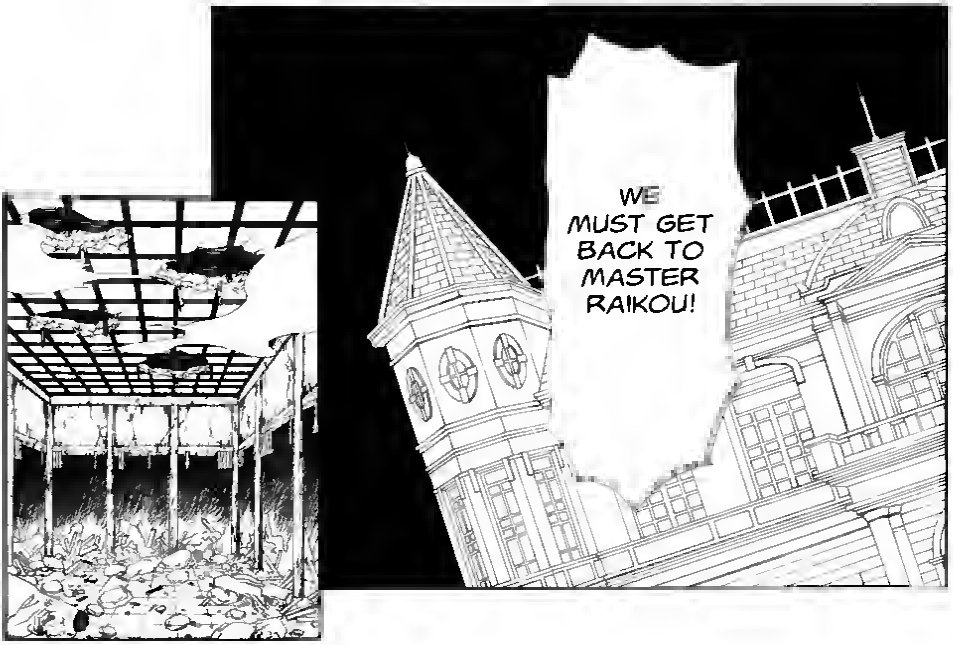
Ka-chang
HEY!
I HATE YOU FOREVER ...!
flip
HOW DARE YOU SAY THAT AFTER RUINING SHUTEN'S BODY! WE WERE ALMOST DONE PUTTING IT TOGETHER!
MAS-TER RAI-KOU!
!
WHO CARES ...?
slash

crunch
IT'S NOTHING TO ME WHETHER YOU HATE ME OR NOT.
THAT YOU TURNED YOUKAI INTO THESE... THINGS DOESN'T MAKE ME MAD, EITHER...
!
SO IT'S TIME TO SETTLE MY SCORE WITH YOUR ANCES-TORS.
BUT NOW YOU'RE DOING IT TO MY FRIENDS.
YOU AND YOUR GUYS, VERSUS ...
...ME AND MY POSSE.

slash
zwip

HUR-
RY...
DAM-
MIT!

SOMEONE MUST'VE DE-STROYED THE BARRIER.
WHERE DID ALL THESE YOUKAI COME FROM?!


WE MUST GET BACK TO MASTER RAIKOU!

RIGHT NOW, FOR HARUKA'S SAKE, WE MUST DECIDE BETWEEN OURSELVES WHICH ONE OF US WILL REVOKE THEIR NAME CONTRACT.
LADY FUJI...
YOU DESIRE FOR THINGS TO REMAIN UNCHANGED, WHILE I HAVE NO CONTENTION WITH CHANGE...
EITHER WAY, NOBODY WILL WALK AWAY FROM THIS UNSCATHED.
WAIT, WHAT DO YOU MEAN ...?
HARUKA...
COULD YOU LEAVE ME ALONE WITH LADY FUJI?
WHAT ...?

...
IT'LL BE FINE.
PLEASE.
SHUTEN...
WE'VE BOTH GOT A HANDICAP ...
...I IN MY POWERS, AND YOU IN BODY.
AND SINCE I'VE BEEN LEFT OUT OF MY MASTERS' DISCUSSION, I FEEL LIKE A FIGHT.
...VERY WELL.
EVERYBODY ELSE HAS BEEN MATCHED UP ALREADY.

LET'S SETTLE OUR AGE-OLD RIVALRY.
SHALL WE BEGIN?
IN ORDER TO WIN AN ARGUMENT ...
...ONE MUST REFUTE THE OPPOSING SIDE.

bam
shwip
ヒュッ

Haa!
Haa
...
WE SEEM TO BE EVENLY MATCHED IN TALENT...?
Huff
hsssssss
Clap
臨
rin
者
sha
皆
kai
兵
pyou
陣
jin
闘
tou
列
retsu
在
zai
前
zen
NOT...
...THE KUJI?!
gwoosh

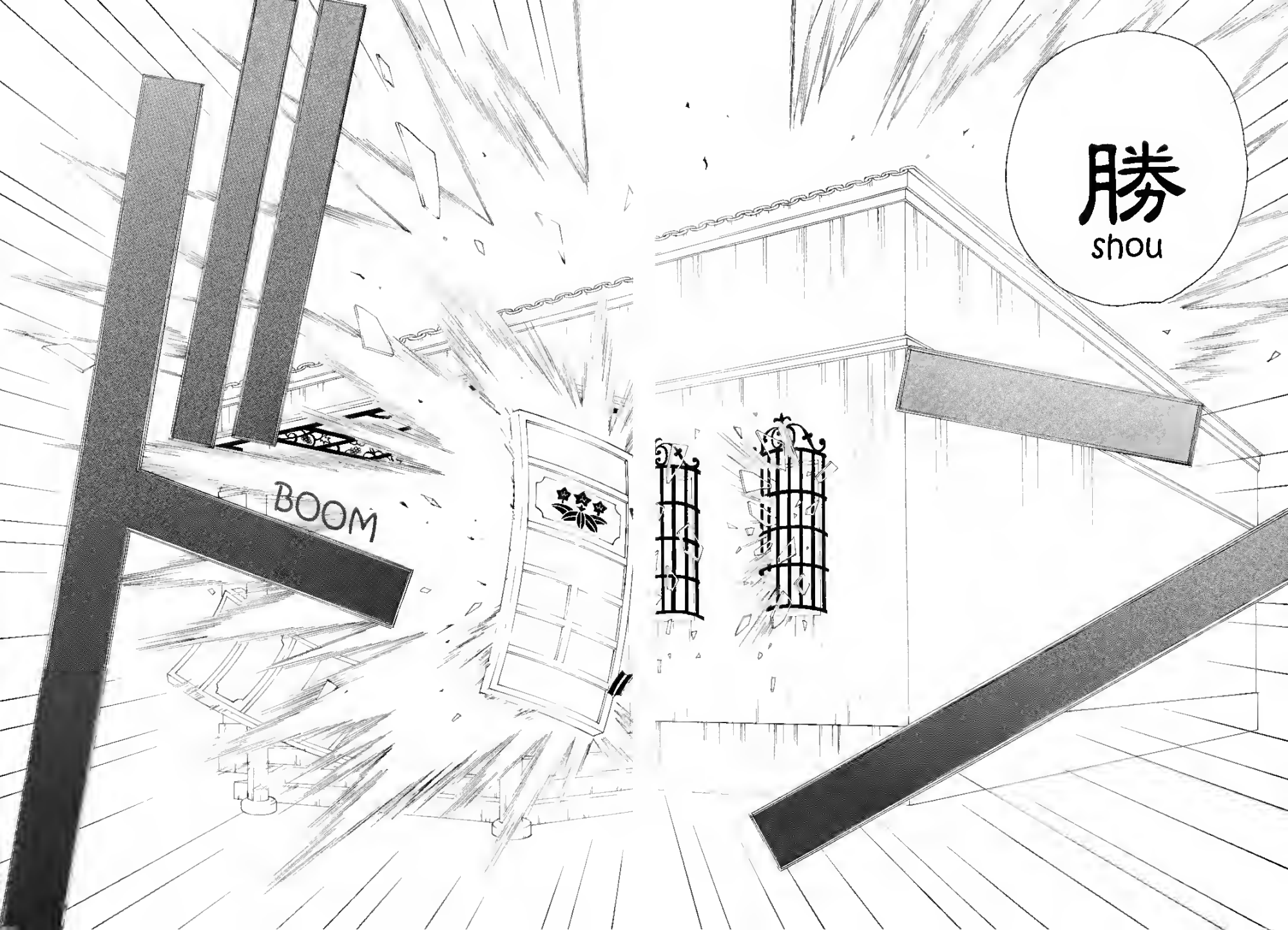
THROWING THE KUJI...
ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND...?! THAT WOULD BLOW A NORMAL PERSON TO SMITHEREENS!
THAT'S WHY I THREW IT AT YOU.
YOU AREN'T A NORMAL PERSON.
smash
On bazerado shakoku !!
...SO WHAT DO YOU DO IN AN ABNORMAL SITUATION?
WHAT?
I'M NOT A NORMAL PERSON, AND I HAVE HIGH SPIRITUAL POWER. THE KUJI DOESN'T WORK ON ME.
THE KUJI DOESN'T WORK...
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY OTHER ATTACKS, RIGHT?

WHA ...?!
I'LL USE THE "JUUJI."
IF THE KUJI WON'T WORK THEN...
THE JUUJI USES POWER BEYOND THE KUJI, A 10TH SEED WORD ON TOP OF THE REGULAR NINE...
IF YOU USE IT, YOU WON'T BE LEFT UNSCATHED. THERE'LL BE CONSE-QUENCES.
DO YOU STILL INTEND TO USE IT ON ME, EVEN SO?
...BECAUSE THE CASTER WIELDING THE TECHNIQUE ALSO TAKES AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF DAMAGE.
THE JUUJI IS EXTREMELY POWERFUL, CERTAINLY, BUT IT'S SELDOM USED...

IF YOU MESS UP, BOTH OF US WILL DIE!!
DON'T YOU SEE?
STOP IT, I SAID!!
Rin pyou tou sha...
LOSING TO YOU WOULD BE WORSE THAN DEATH!
I ABSOLUTELY REFUSE TO LOSE TO THE ONE WHO CHANGED RIN'S HEART SO COMPLETELY!!

IF ONLY YOU WEREN'T HERE...
RIN WOULDN'T HATE ME LIKE HE DOES NOW.
OR BE WOUNDING ME WITH HIS WORDS...

EVEN THOUGH HARUKA HAS BEEN TELLING YOU ALL ALONG.
臨 rin
兵 pyou
闘 tou
者 sha
YOU REALLY DON'T UNDER-STAND ANY-THING ...
...LADY FUJI...
Crunch
列 retsu
在 zai
前 zen
HARUKA HAS ALWAYS ...
皆 kai
陣 jin


BOOM
勝
shou

vwoosh
WHA ...?
WHAT IS IT?
THIS SENSA-TION...?
...THIS IS...
shudder
shudder
...HGCK!
...DEMON EATER?
GASP!
joit
splut
splut

URGH... TCH...
whump
HEH HEH...
I DID IT...
I BEAT KAN-TAROU ICHINO-MIYA...!
NOW RIN WILL BE ALL...
clack

RIN...
WHAT'S HAP-PENED TO YOU...?

Higashiyama-Style Postscript

Yay! It's the tenth volume! We've managed to come this far because of all you readers who bought and read the series!! Really, truly, thank you so very much!

Though I'm wondering if the story's had too many twists and turns, by all means please continue to follow our tactics. ♥

This winter's so cold that Higashiyama ended up with her hair under her scarf, just like Haruka in this sketch.

Feb XX 2008
Kazuko
Higashiyama

RIN?
I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU LIKE THIS BEFORE ...
stare...
COULD IT BE...
...ALL YOUR YOUKAI POWER HAS RE-TURNED?
THEN...

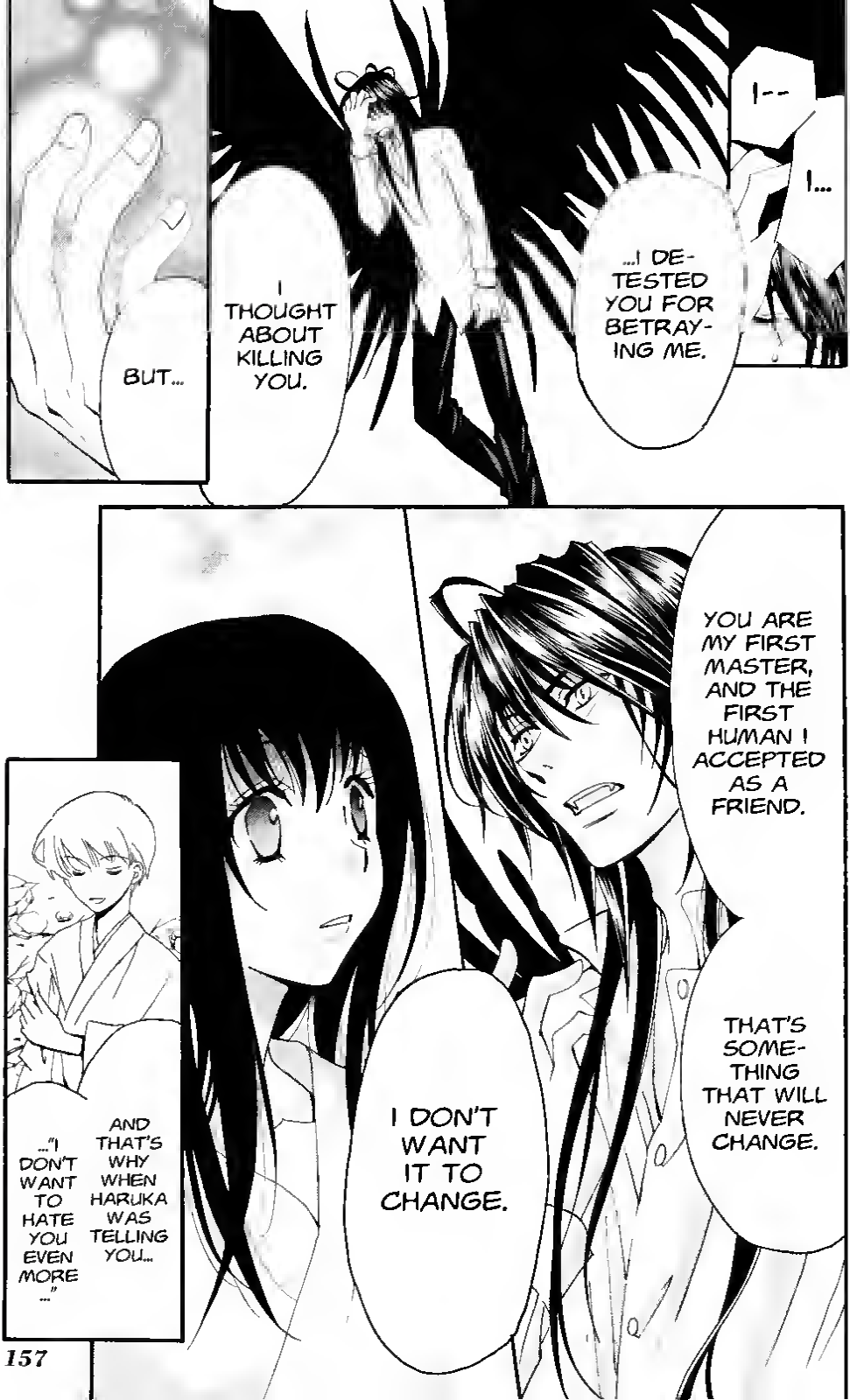
THAT MEANS YOU'RE FREE OF THE DOUBLE NAME-CON-TRACT...
YOU'VE COME BACK TO ME, RIN...!
"GIVE ME A HAND, RIN."
I CAN'T STAND UP, I MAY HAVE SPRAINED MY ANKLE.
COME ON, RIN.
SCRUNCH

UGH... YEAH...
YOU ALL RIGHT, KANTAROU?
RIN ...?
MY NAME ...
MY NAME IS "HARUKA."
MY CONTRACT UNDER THE NAME "RIN" HAS BEEN REVOKED.

BUT YOU DID USE THE JUUJI.
I DIDN'T USE THE KOTO-DAMA TO RELEASE HIS NAME.
WHAT IS THIS NON-SENSE...?
clench
THE JUUJI IS A FRIGHTENING SPELL--IT'S MORE POWER-FUL THAN THE KUJI, BUT THAT POWER RE-BOUNDS ON THE CASTER AS WELL.
BECAUSE IT STRIKES BOTH TARGET AND WIELDER AT THE SAME TIME, EVERY-ONE AVOIDS USING IT.
ALSO BECAUSE IT'S A SPELL WITH *SUCH* UNBELIEVABLE POWER...
...IT WILL OBLITERATE CONTRACTS BETWEEN THE CASTER AND ANY YOUKAI WHO ARE BOUND TO THEM.
ACCORDINGLY, THE JUUJI IS CALLED THE "HIDDEN REVO-CATION." THERE ARE VERY FEW WHO KNOW OF THIS FACT.

FOR ME, IT WAS A GAMBLE.
YOU GOADED ME INTO USING THE JUUJI ON PURPOSE!
YOU HOR-RIBLE MAN!
AS A GENERAL RULE...
I SURVIVED, BUT NOT WITHOUT A FEW BROKEN BONES.
I WAS BETTING THAT YOU WOULDN'T KNOW THAT THE JUUJI IS A HIDDEN RE-VOCATION... AND THAT I COULD WITH-STAND THE ATTACK.
YET YOU HAD ME USE THE JUUJI IN SPITE OF THAT...?
...IT'S NOT UNUSUAL FOR THAT SPELL TO KILL BOTH PARTIES.

RIN...
...DO YOU LOOK THAT WAY BECAUSE YOUR POWERS RETURNED WHILE I WAS FIGHTING ICHINOMIYA?
YEAH... PROB-ABLY.
SO FROM THE MOMENT I CAST THE JUUJI...
FOR ME, THE VERY FIRST WORD WAS 'RIN'...
...BUT IT WAS ALSO THE VERY LAST.
I MAY NOT HAVE WISHED FOR THIS RESULT ...
clench
...BUT SOME THINGS WILL NEVER CHANGE.
WHAT?
"SPEAK YOUR TRUE FEEL-INGS, HARUKA."
?!


I--
I...
...I DETESTED YOU FOR BETRAYING ME.
I THOUGHT ABOUT KILLING YOU.
BUT...
YOU ARE MY FIRST MASTER, AND THE FIRST HUMAN I ACCEPTED AS A FRIEND.
THAT'S SOMETHING THAT WILL NEVER CHANGE.
I DON'T WANT IT TO CHANGE.
AND THAT'S WHY WHEN HARUKA WAS TELLING YOU...
..."I DON'T WANT TO HATE YOU EVEN MORE..."

HE REALLY MEANT, "STOP, BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO HATE YOU AT ALL."
YOU KNOW...
IT'S MORE YOUR STYLE TO EITHER SMILE OR LOOK ANGRY...
DON'T CRY.
OH, RIN...

DON'T LET THEM SEDUCE YOU...
...FUJI.
DEMON EATER ...
CONCERN FOR THIS BODY PUTS YOU AT A DISADVANTAGE.
YOUR CONTACT WITH HUMANS HAS MADE YOU EVEN WEAKER, JUST AS I EXPECTED.
...YOU FORGET...
...ONLY MAKES ME WANT TO KILL YOU MORE CRUELLY.
WHILE THE MERE SIGHT OF YOUR FORM...

I HAVE A KNACK FOR ON-MYOU-DOU...
...SO I CAN ATTACK YOUR SOUL, NOT THAT BODY.
Spirits stray not from the path of righteous-ness, humans fall not into uncertainty.
Crack
SAAH!
FUJI! SUPPORT ME!
OTHERWISE YOU AND I WILL BOTH BE ANNIHI-LATED!
FUJI!
...
LORD SHUTEN!
LORD SHUTEN, YOUR BEAD...!
Gasp!
NOW, RESIGN YOUR-SELF TO YOUR...

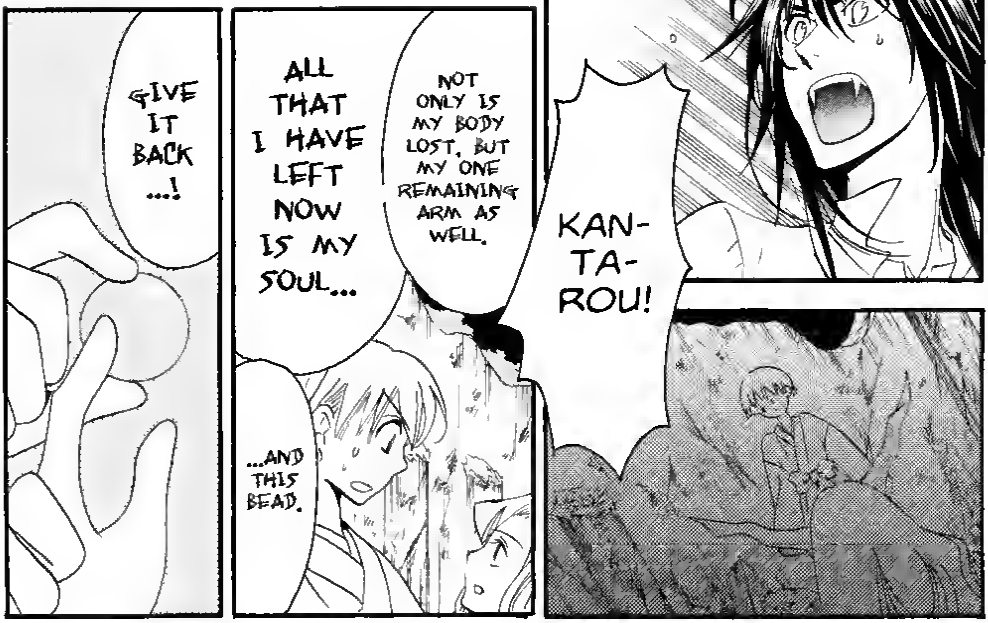
WHAT ...
フー
bwoosh
AUGH!
WHAT'S WITH YOUR ARM?!
MISTER DEMON EATER...
...YOU WILL FIGHT ME NOW.

WHEN WE FIRST MET, DIDN'T YOU SAY...
...ONLY THE KOUSHIN-EYED DEMON-EATING TENGU"...
...CAN DEFEAT THIS ARM"?
I DID.
wnump
...DO YOU LIKE HAVING THIS ARM?
THAT'S NONE OF YOUR CONCERN.
Heh!

slash
AM THE KOUSHIN-EYED DEMON-EATING TENGU.
...
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?

SHUT UP, YOU.
AREN'T YOU GETTING EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANTED?
THAT'S ONE OF MY FOUR HEAV-ENLY KINGS ...!!
?!
Crunch
...HRGK!
Jangle
Jangle
GO AHEAD, TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT.
ME WITH MY LIMITS REMOVED, SO YOU CAN DEFEAT ME AT MY MOST POWERFUL?
NOT GOING TO STRIKE?
ALL RIGHT, THEN AS THANKS FOR EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE, I'LL PAY YOU BACK IN PAIN.
SCrilip

Ka-tchank
fwump
HARUKA!
...


KAN-TA-ROU!
NOT ONLY IS MY BODY LOST, BUT MY ONE REMAINING ARM AS WELL.
ALL THAT I HAVE LEFT NOW IS MY SOUL...
...AND THIS BEAD.
GIVE IT BACK ...!

ふふふ
Crack

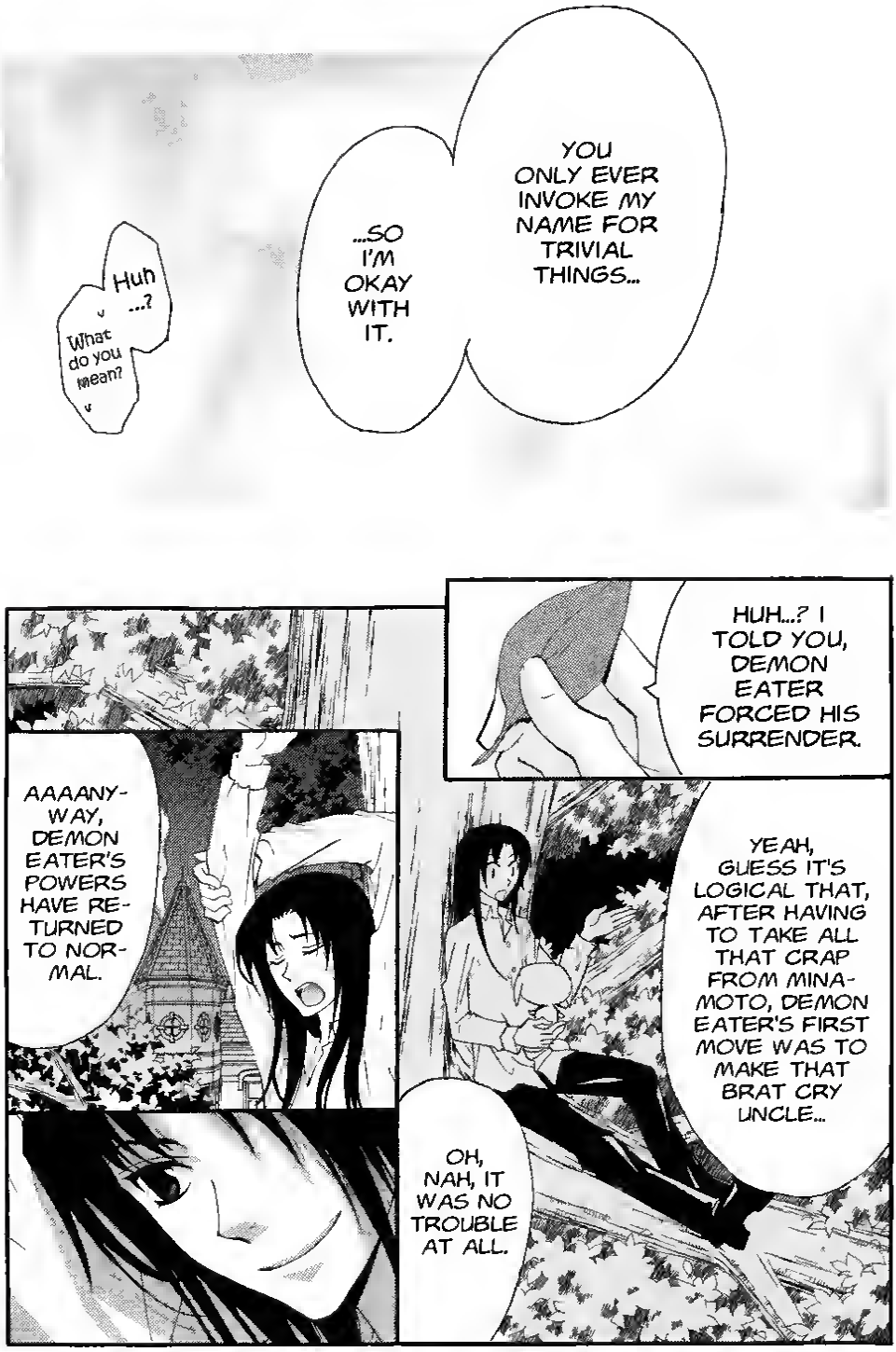
I SEE...
pshing
YOU'RE ONLY HUMAN AFTER ALL... FUJI.
...I DID GET TO HAVE SOME FUN IN THE END.
THOUGH I CAN NO LONGER BE RESURRECT-ED...
...FU...
gumnp
gumnp

SEE, RIN? YOUR VOICE REALLY IS STRONGER THAN KOTODAMA.
FUJI!
IF YOU HADN'T SPOKEN TO ME AS YOU DID A MOMENT AGO...
...I DOUBT I COULD BID YOU FAREWELL WITH A SMILE ON MY FACE.

BOTH FUJI AND I HAVE LIVED ON THANKS TO LORD SHUTEN'S POWER TO STOP TIME.
LORD SHUTEN'S ANNIHILATION BRINGS OUR ANNIHILATION.
SO I'LL STRIKE...
shursh
!
...ONE FINAL BLOW...
...GASP ?!

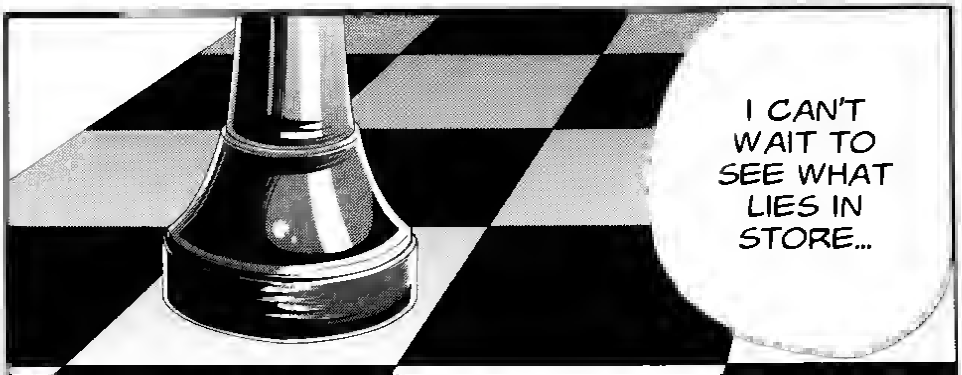
RIN...
...IT'S...
sssshhff
...
!
HM?
WHAT WAS THAT ...?
JUST NOW...
I THINK FUJI WAS TRYING TO TELL ME SOME-THING...
JUST THAT SHE REGRETS LEAVING YOU, HARUKA.

...HA-
RUKA...
THANK
YOU.
...
SINCE
SHE'LL
NEVER
SEE YOU
AGAIN.


YOU ONLY EVER INVOKE MY NAME FOR TRIVIAL THINGS...
...SO I'M OKAY WITH IT.
Huh ...?
What do you mean?
HUH...? I TOLD YOU, DEMON EATER FORCED HIS SURRENDER.
YEAH, GUESS IT'S LOGICAL THAT, AFTER HAVING TO TAKE ALL THAT CRAP FROM MINAMOTO, DEMON EATER'S FIRST MOVE WAS TO MAKE THAT BRAT CRY UNCLE...
OH, NAH, IT WAS NO TROUBLE AT ALL.
AAAANYWAY, DEMON EATER'S POWERS HAVE RETURNED TO NORMAL.

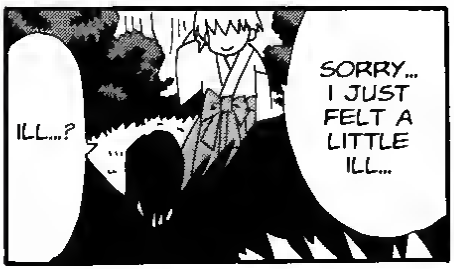
LET'S SEE HOW LONG YOU CAN MAKE A BOND BETWEEN HUMAN AND YOUKAI LAST...
...KANTAROU ICHINOMIYA.

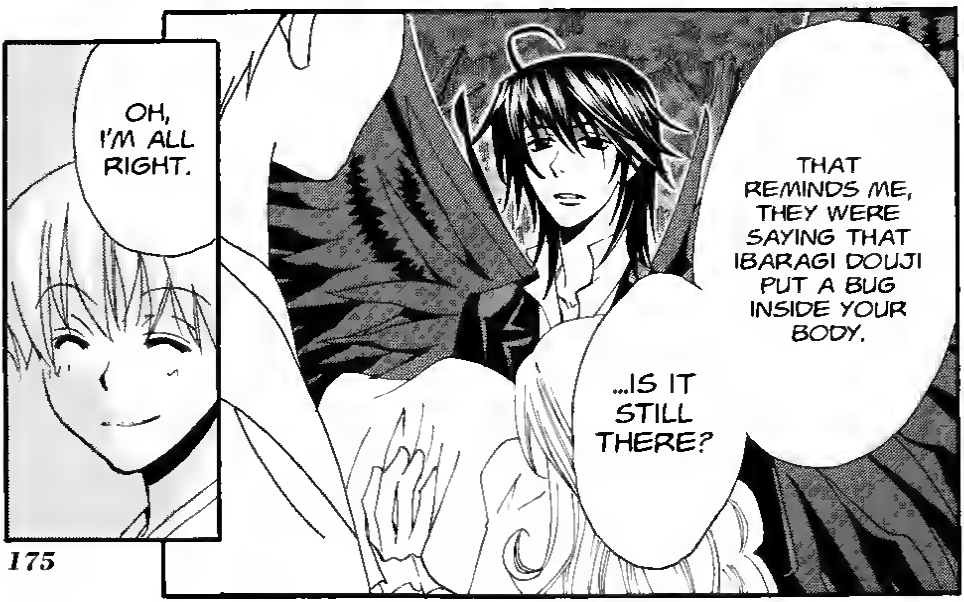
NOW THEN, WHAT GAMBIT WILL THEY EMPLOY NEXT?
Hee hee
AT LAST...
AT LONG LAST, THE GAME IS AFOOT.

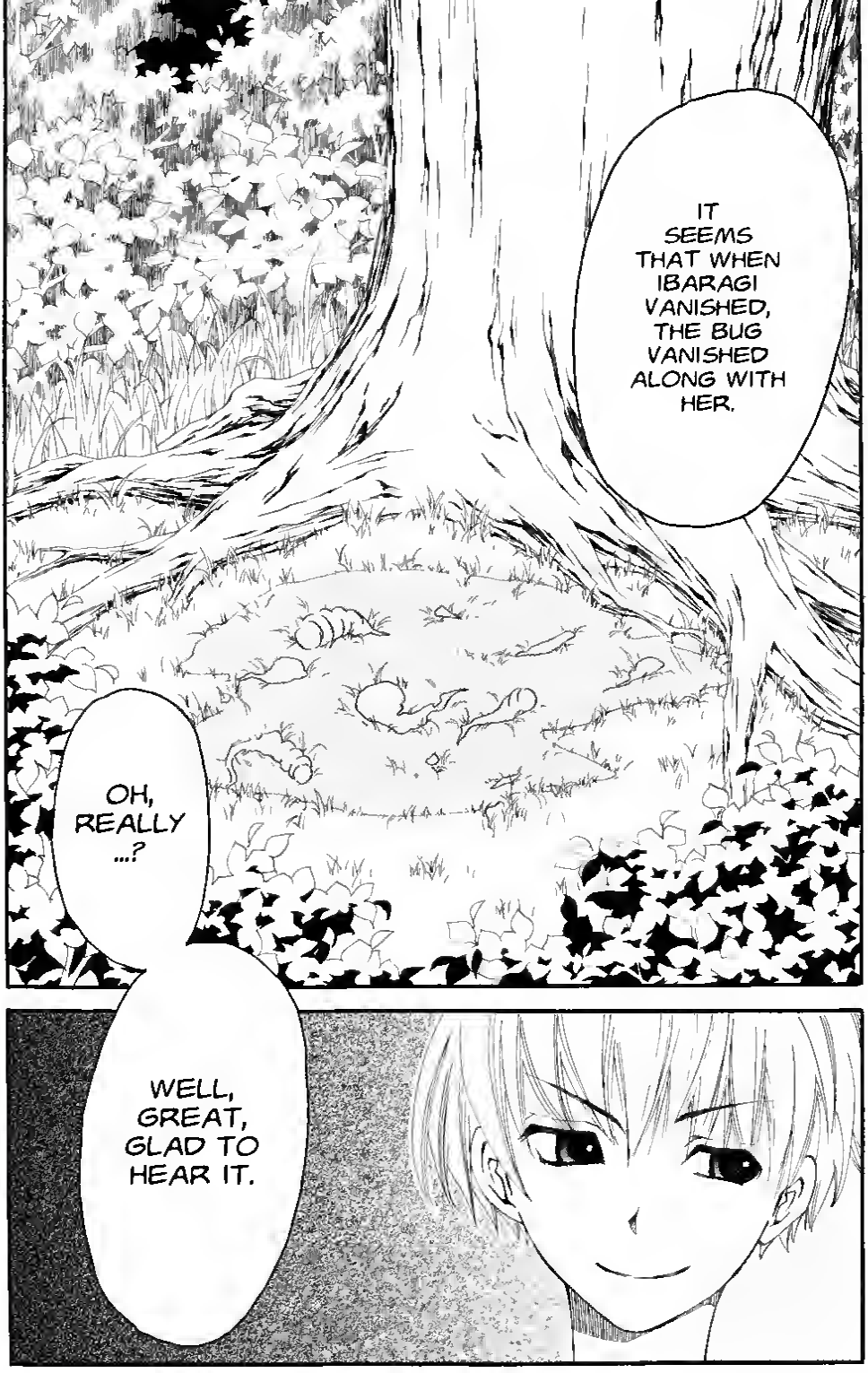

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHAT LIES IN STORE...

KAN-TAROU!
WHERE'D YOU WANDER OFF TO? I'M HEADING HOME

Cough ゴホ
Cough ゴホ
ゴホ Hrghk!


SORRY... I JUST FELT A LITTLE ILL...
ILL...?


OH, I'M ALL RIGHT.
THAT REMINDS ME, THEY WERE SAYING THAT IBARAGI DOUJI PUT A BUG INSIDE YOUR BODY.
...IS IT STILL THERE?


IT SEEMS THAT WHEN IBARAGI VANISHED, THE BUG VANISHED ALONG WITH HER.
OH, REALLY ...?
WELL, GREAT, GLAD TO HEAR IT.